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VOL. VIII, No. 3

JANUARY and FEBRUARY, 1937

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A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF HIGH SCHOOL DRAMATICS



PUBLISHED BY THE
NATIONAL THESPIAN DRAMATIC HONOR SOCIETY
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BROADWAY AT A GLANCE

by
Margaret
Wentworth

SO far this has been a comedy season with serious plays closing almost as soon as they open. It remains to be seen whether Maxwell Anderson's reputation as a playwright and Miss Cornell's public will keep *The Wingless Victory* with us. Probably they will.

The Wingless Victory

If Anderson had here as good a play as his best, I should feel no doubt; but his attitude of defeatism seems to be growing on him and makes his supposed hero, Walter Abel, more of a weakling than we feel a hard-fisted Yankee sea captain ought to be. Miss Cornell is lovely to behold as the Malay princess who cannot withstand the forces of bigotry and race prejudice in Salem without her husband's loyal support; but she is superb in her denunciation of them and in the lonely pride which causes her to seek death for herself and her children, rather than to be sent back alone to a country from which she has been cut off. Mr. Anderson attributes his plot to Medea though the critics have looked nearer home at *Java Head* and *Madame Butterfly*.

Johnny Johnson

Johnny Johnson, the Group's first offering of the year, is a most interesting experiment in combining music with a play without turning it into an opera or demanding trained voices. Kurt Weill, the German composer who furnished the musical arrangements for *The Eternal Road*, now about to open after a two-years' delay, worked with Paul Green while he was writing the play so that the music is an integral part of it. The play is an intermingling of fact and fantasy and makes a spirited plea for peace while intermingling richly comic scenes with its serious ones. The Group ensemble acting is always noteworthy.

You Can't Take It With You

You Can't Take It With You is a heart-warming farce-comedy about the doings of a family; all its members have bees in their bonnets, yet the bees make honey and don't sting. The genial atmosphere of the piece is probably due to the fact that Moss Hart has a kindlier outlook on life than Kaufman's whose recent works have seldom lacked the sting. The play is rich in acting opportunities but might easily be overdone. Henry Travers and Josephine Hull are among those who help keep it just sane enough.

Brother Rat

Brother Rat is a comedy about V. M. I. on which that famous military school has

set the seal of its august approval. Hazing, the guardhouse and punishment drill here become, not tragedies, but daily incidents to be taken in one's stride. The irresponsible trio of cadets in whom we are chiefly interested have a grand time blundering from scrape to scrape and repeatedly rescued from expulsion. The play is by two young men, former cadets, and George Abbott has given it to a young gay cast who are on their toes to make good and are doing so to everyone's satisfaction.

The Country Wife

It seems a pity to go back to the dis-solute days of Charles II to revive a play whose chief pretension to wit is the amount of smut it contains. *The Country Wife* has seldom, if ever, been played here before in an unexpurgated version. Ruth Gordon is delightful in the title role, arch, yet innocent, naive, yet eager to experiment. The period costumes and sets are beautiful. It could hardly be done better; but why do it at all?

Tonight at 8:30

Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence are having enormous success with the nine one-act plays which Mr. Coward has done under the inclusive title, *Tonight at 8:30*. Three plays are given together, one a typical Coward comedy, one a serious drama and one musical. They are pure theatre without a shadow of turning towards the screen. The small supporting cast is excellent, particularly Joyce Carey.

The Women

The Women, which is by Clare Booth, is a clever, rather cruel satire on gossip. A large cast, all women, deliver its keen, witty lines and wear gorgeous gowns through its dozen appropriate scenes, which include a beauty parlor, a dress salon, a hotel room at Reno and a bath-

room, done in colored marbles and with Betty Lawford discovered in the tub. Ilka Chase is chief of the poison tongues; Margalo Gillmore, the victim who is jockeyed into divorcing a husband whom she adores. One doesn't miss men from the play; you feel they've just stepped out to smoke.

Promise

Promise, a translation of Henri Bernstein's *Espoir*, is a quiet, well-bred play, in which the problem is chiefly psychological. It has a predominantly English cast. Sir Cedric Hardwicke finds that Frank Lawton has fallen out of love with his own daughter and wants to marry his step-daughter, the family Ugly Duckling. Engagements are taken so much more seriously in France that it takes three acts to have them happily married.

Around the Corner

Around the Corner is a simple, straightforward story of how one American family reacted to the depression. The out-of-work son and son-in-law stage a hold-up to get funds. It proves abortive and has the unusual effect of uniting the family instead of disrupting it. The play has a good deal of homely philosophy which is given full value by Charles Coburn in the role of the perplexed father of the family.

Aged 26

Aged 26 is based on the life of Keats. Without much action, it nevertheless presents movingly the ill-fated love between him and Fanny Brawne—a love shadowed from its inception by his approaching death from tuberculosis. The play is kinder to the character of Fanny than most of the traditions.

All Editions

All Editions is a melodramatic farce on the theme that publicity is a racket and that if you scratch the highly paid press agent you find the honky-tonk barker underneath.

Musicals

Two glittering musicals are doing business. The older *Red, Hot and Blue* boasts Jimmy Durante, Ethel Merman and Bob Hope; Christmas night brought *The Show Is On*, starring Beatrice Lillie and Bert Lahr and featuring beside Reginald Gardiner's monologues and Paul Haakon's dancing.

This season the French Theatre is giving a series of eight plays in the Barbizon Plaza. The company is good and it's a pleasant way to cultivate your ear.

Other Successes Now Playing on Broadway

Boy Meets Girl.....by Bela and Samuel Spewack
Dead End.....Sidney Kingsley
Hamlet (Gielgud).....Shakespeare
Idiot's Delight.....R. E. Sherwood
High Tor.....Maxwell Anderson
Othello.....Shakespeare
Stage Door.....Kaufman and Ferber
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EDITORIAL—WE SAY



OUR AIM: "To create a Spirit of Active and Intelligent Interest in Dramatics Among Boys and Girls of our Secondary Schools."

Tournaments or Festivals?

The question regarding the superiority of the play contest over the play festival, and vice versa, seems to be attracting new interest each year. According to one group, the play contest is educationally and dramatically satisfactory, and it alone can provide those incentives which cause students and teachers to put forth their very best efforts in the production of outstanding dramatic work, and receive the highest benefits from experience of this kind. According to another group, the dramatic festival is the ideal form of inter-school participation, and it alone can achieve those results which events of this type are supposed to produce.

We have no desire to side with either of these groups. Such a step at this time would be, in our opinion, decidedly premature and based upon insufficient evidence, regardless of which side we favored. In the first place, our so-called dramatic tournaments have not been in existence long enough to show conclusively that they are good or bad. In the second place, experience with the few play festivals now in existence seems to us to be too meagre to be used as a basis for arriving at conclusions. In the third place, we know of no exhaustive study made on the subject to show that one is superior to the other. We know of a few play contests which have been discontinued because the results were thought to be unsatisfactory. We also know that in some instances the play festivals are already beginning to develop dissatisfaction among some of the participants.

The claim that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the play contest is not true. This is shown not only by the fact that in the past few years a number of apparently highly successful contests have come into existence, but also by the fact that each year finds many new participants among them. It is equally true, of course, that there is a growing interest in dramatic festivals, and it is our sincere hope that more of them be organized each year. We believe the best course for the present is that of having both contests and festivals develop side by side. The advantages, if any, of one over the other will become apparent as we gather new experience, as we develop a greater interest in drama and dramatics, and as we accumulate sufficient reliable data on which sound decisions can be based.

We also believe that the final choice in favor of one or the other *must be made by the participants*. We hope to say more on this question in our March-April issue. We will gladly print your comments.

Let Us Publish Your Comments

The article, "The Plays We Want," by Mr. O. E. Sams, Jr., which appears on page 4 presents a timely challenge to all who are concerned with the field of educational dramatics. It is of equal significance to producers and publishers alike. We don't know whether Mr. Sams is voicing the sentiments of the majority of high school teachers and directors, but we do believe he presents a subject which demands our closest attention. We believe that publishers can furnish the type of high school plays teachers and directors want, providing that the latter group make their demands known. For this reason, we should like to publish, in our forthcoming issues, your comments on the questions which are presented in Mr. Sams' article. We should like to hear from the publishers also. We think that the results of a round-table discussion such as we suggest here will be beneficial to all.

Beatrice Terry

Miss Beatrice Terry, whose picture appears on our Cover for this issue, made her first stage appearance at the age of three with her aunt, the late Dame Ellen Terry, and Sir Henry Irving in *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Since then she has given many notable performances of which perhaps the best remembered is her Laura Atherton in Martin Flavin's play, *Children of the Moon*. Last season she played Lady Catharine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*. Miss Terry has an active interest in the growth and development of dramatics in our schools. We are happy to publish the following piece of advice which this gracious actress has sent to our high school readers:

"The first purpose of the theatre is to provide good entertainment. Life is full of problems. People do not wish to face in the theatre problems which will only serve to remind them of their own insufficient lives. They want to be lifted out of themselves—to be thrilled, to laugh, to weep. This does not mean that problems cannot be presented in the theatre, but they must be presented in such a way that those who see them worked out can forget about themselves—lose themselves in the play. It is, therefore, up to the actor. He must be convincing; and it is only through intelligent hard-work that an actor can be convincing. He should throw himself wholeheartedly into the portraying of a character and live that character. The actor who is "always the same"—"always himself," instead of being completely the person he is playing, should not be on the stage. So I would say to all who are connected with the stage, be it through high school dramatics, amateur society or the professional theatre, three things: work hard; forget yourself, and remember only the character you are playing; and, above all, use your imagination."

Meanwhile, The National Thespian Society will conduct, among its members, a questionnaire this coming spring, based upon Mr. Sams' suggestions. The results will be made known early next fall.

Welcome, Dr. Savage

We gladly present to our readers, Dr. George Savage, Jr., who becomes, with this issue, a member of our editorial family. Dr. Savage needs little introduction, however, as he is a popular staff member of the English Department of the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, and is the author of a number of plays, many of which are produced annually by our high schools and colleges. He is vitally interested in the work of The National Thespian Society, and is now editing a series of articles dealing with major figures and tendencies in the theatre of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, written by the research students of the Division of Drama of the University of Washington. The third of these articles appear on page 10 of this issue.

Our National Theatre

In recent years we have heard much said about the founding of a national theatre in America, comparable to those which are found in many of the European countries. Several theatre and drama organizations have given their full support to this movement; and rightly so, for America certainly should have such a theatre.

We believe, however, that only when our country is ready for it, will there be a national theatre in America. The demand for such an institution must come from our people, and that demand will not come until our people are ready, socially and culturally, to accept it. The building of our national theatre must begin with its carefully laid foundations, and not with the roof, which unfortunately seems to have been placed first in the building plans of too many enthusiasts. The foundations must be laid in the classrooms of our schools and colleges, in the hearts and minds of our young people. Only when they, the men and women of tomorrow, have been trained to understand and appreciate the fundamental values of a national theatre in our American culture, can we expect complete success in founding an institution of this type. Those who clamor for a national theatre must realize that only *via* the schoolroom will their dreams become a reality. Meanwhile, how long will it be before our well-meaning enthusiasts realize that the foundations, and not the roof, comes first in building our national theatre?



Scene from the play, *NEW FIRES*, produced at Cheney (Washington) High School, under the direction of Miss Eloise Neilson.

The Plays We Want

An Open Letter to Publishers and Playwrights

by O. E. SAMS, JR.

Director of Dramatics, Knoxville (Tenn.) High School.

FROM one to six or more times each school year, it becomes the duty of one or more persons in almost every high school to pick a play suitable for students to present and for audiences to enjoy. Now, on the surface, it would seem to the ordinary individual that choosing a play should be a comparatively easy job, since there are actually hundreds of plays from a score or more of publishers to consider. But on the other hand, when all standards by which plays are measured are taken into consideration, the resulting play requirements of each school narrows the selection down to an exceedingly small list, and quite often the play which is ideal in every circumstance is never found.

The average director of dramatics in the high school is confronted with a number of questions when selection time comes. Must his play carry a definite literary appeal? or does his audience demand mere surface entertainment? Does it ask for sophisticated Broadway productions? or are its tastes so undeveloped that only slapstick comedy or farce is enjoyed? Taking into consideration the estimated door receipts, how much can he afford to pay for royalty and play-books? Can he afford to build one or more scenery sets to fit a certain type of play he desires to present? He wants to give as many students as possible a chance to act; therefore, how many characters should be in the play he selects? How many more girls than boys will "try out" for the play? Does the particular talent on hand promise to handle any one type of play better than another? Should he change from the type of play he has been using, so that he will be able to give his audience more variety? Does the size or construction of his stage, the lighting facilities, or the scenery on hand (which he must use) demand a certain type of drama?

But no matter how many questions come to the mind of the director, there

Mr. Sams is a graduate of Carson Newman College, of which his father became president in 1920. In 1928 he received the Degree of Bachelor of Literature from the School of Journalism at Columbia University. He is now working on a Master's Degree at the University of Tennessee. Besides serving as director of dramatics for several years at Knoxville (Tenn.) High School, Mr. Sams has sponsored the activities of Troupe No. 283 and is now Thespian Regional Director for his State. His play productions have been outstanding in the field of high school dramatics.

is always one hope which he has, one almost selfish desire which he harbors. This is nothing more or less than the hope that his play will succeed and please both his cast and his audience. Too, there is the desire in the heart of the true director that his play will be something big, something fine, and something which carries with it a feeling of true artistic accomplishment.

Most publishers and authors of plays have kept in touch with the needs and requirements of the average high school group. A hasty survey of almost any play publisher's catalogue will show a constant attempt on the part of the publisher to make their plays simple and easy to produce, and yet novel and entertaining. Balanced casts, one-interior settings, and easy-to-follow unsophisticated plots have seemed to be the specifications.

But have they succeeded in publishing, on the whole, the play which most ideally suits the average high school demands? Generally speaking, we do not believe that they have. Of course, out of the thousands of plays published, it is possible to find a few which almost "measure up". But these are so few that we soon use them all and then have to fall back on plays which do not suit us so well.

What then does it take for a play to be an ideal one for high school use? First of all, we would suggest a play of youth with a maximum of adolescent characters and a minimum of middle aged and old characters. After all, no

matter how good the make-up and how authentic the costuming, the average high school student never seems to ring true in character parts. Many play their parts well, of course, but certainly the perfect illusions so far as character parts are concerned are few in high school dramatic circles.

Nor do we say that the ideal high school play should be devoid of adult characters. This would be practically impossible in that almost all realistic situations either on or off stage require adult participation to make them so. Our point is that adult characters should be cut to the minimum and subordinated in the plot as much as possible, letting the adolescent, or in some cases the slightly older than adolescent, character predominate. The average high school student pleads for a part in which he can express *himself* before the audience. When he is required to be a father, a mother, an aunt, or an uncle he cannot do this. Shall we teach him that he *must* play the older part since all real acting is that which requires the actor to throw himself out of himself and be someone else while he is on the stage? He might nod his head and say, "All right, I'll take it", but the fact remains that the student is not a great actor nor does he have one chance in ten thousand of ever being a great actor no matter how high his aspirations are. He will take the part, but more than likely the audience will be conscious of powdered hair, conservative clothes, and thick grease-paint rather than the older character which we want them to see.

So let our main plea to our friends, the publishers and playwrights, be to give us more youthful characters and less old men and women.

Our next very urgent request is that the great majority of high school plays have a larger number of female characters.

(Continued on page 13)

What a Publisher Wants In a Play He Accepts

by FREDERICK B. INGRAM

Publisher, Frederick B. Ingram Publications, Rock Island, Ill.

THE butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker—if you were to ask them—would each tell you that he wants to sell what you want to buy. Whether or not an article is worth offering for sale is a question that is inevitably and without exception decided by the buying public. As true as this is with the average merchant, it is even more definitely axiomatic with the play publisher. You and you and you and Tom Smith and Mary Jones are the final judges who decide what a publisher wants in the play he accepts.

For quite some years it was currently believed by the general public that all matters pertaining to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts submitted for publication were decided in dictatorial fashion by a hard-boiled, pompous editor in a stuffy little office. In fact, there were numerous stories going the rounds to the effect that certain editors tossed the manuscripts in the air over a flight of stairs, accepting those that landed on the steps and rejecting those that reached the landing. Now the truth of the matter is that the very few publishing houses which have attempted to carry on business on that sort of basis have learned in a very short time that the literature buying public knows definitely what it wants and cannot be made to take and like the thing it doesn't want.

The publisher of plays must constantly keep his finger, so to speak, upon the public pulse. The entertaining buying public is a most discriminating one and is most emphatic in enforcing its requirements. No publisher, no producer, no publicity man, no critic has ever made a play into a "hit". Plays are successful because they are accepted by enthusiastic audiences and under no other circumstances. Let's just consider the plays of William Shakespeare as an example. Shakespeare wrote long before the days of "super colossal ballyhoo" but his plays were tremendous successes. He wrote them—produced them—and acted in them, and they were without question the hits of the day. Incidentally, this was not because they were fine pieces of literature that would some day be studied in high schools, but because they were superb showmanship. Shakespeare knew what his public wanted and he wrote just that. Take a little time some day to read one or two of his plays without thinking of them as required reading on which you will have to answer questions in English class tomorrow. Think of them as material to be actually staged and

After his graduation from Northwestern University, Mr. Ingram became a pioneer in the field of producing musical comedies with amateur casts. For seventeen years, he has produced musical comedies in every state in the Union. He has also worked with the Chatauqua and Redpath Entertainment Bureaus. In the fall of 1934, Mr. Ingram organized the Frederick B. Ingram Publications, which is now one of the leading play publishing firms in America.

you'll see why they were great. Note the swift and inevitable action of his tragedies and the sparkling comedy relief found in such characters as the gravedigger in *Hamlet* and the highly amusing characterizations such as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*. In Shakespeare you will find practically everything a publisher wants in the play he accepts.

The history of the legitimate theatre in America has been a curious one and for that very reason a brief survey of it is essential to a discussion of this sort. When our nation was rather young, New York City, as the largest center of population, lost little time in claiming the American stage as her own. Broadway in the gradual development became the arbitrary dictator to whom and for whom all plays in this country were written. But such absolute dominion was not fated to last forever. New Yorkers were not the only Americans to whom the art of the drama appealed. The tastes of Broadway audiences were not the only tastes in America. A change was inevitable, and the change came.

Here and there throughout the nation, high schools began to feel the urge and the need for dramatic expression. At the very outset, however, they were confronted with a serious problem. Publishers of plays were few. Their prices and production fees were far beyond the modest budgets allowed by school boards who failed to see the necessity for "play-acting" in their schools. Some tried to write their own plays, but soon found that the technique of writing for the stage is not acquired over night. Several publishers began to offer cheap material—cheap in every sense of the word—such as *Hiram Slick of Punkin Creek* and other titles of similar sound and quality. Then the matter came to the attention of Broadway. Producers began to see in the amateur market a chance to glean new revenue from the plays that had once packed their theatres, but were now gathering dust instead of profits. So yesterday's Broadway plays became today's offerings to amateurs.

But none of this material could long satisfy the demands of the high school

players. They wanted and they asked for, in no uncertain voice, a new type of play—a play written expressly for them with their needs and their limitations given full consideration. It was not long before playwrights awoke to the new situation. Now at last, they need no longer confine their efforts to a certain street in a certain city. They could write for a nation. With all the enthusiasm and clear thinking of clean-minded youth, the high school players had taken the theatre from Broadway and given it to America. Today the stage is everyone's property.

What is it then that high schools require—if they are the judges who decide what the publisher wants? It would take volumes to answer the question completely, but here are a few of the things we've found in our own experience. First of all, the most successful plays are about ordinary human beings and ordinary human events. The sensational or outlandish in either characterization or plot seldom merits or receives long-continued popularity. The basic situation of the plot need not be even original. In fact, if it were absolutely original it would be an eighth wonder of the world. Even "man bites dog" isn't new; it's been done before. As the writer of *Ecclesiastes* said thousands of years ago, "There is nothing new under the sun." Take all the great plays ever written, and it is extremely doubtful whether you will find even ten distinctly original plots. Let's just take one popular plot as an example of the manner in which it works out.

Of the classical comedies of ancient Greece and Rome, one of the best known is *The Twins*, by Plautus, which was first produced about 200 B. C. The basic situation is mistaken identity. Since *The Twins* dozens of the best comedies of every age in the history of the theatre have been built on that identical situation. Just to mention a few—there are: Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*, Congreve's *Way of the World*, Sheridan's *Scheming Lieutenant*, Goldsmith's *She Stoops To Conquer*, Moliere's *School For Wives*, Jerome K. Jerome's *The Celebrity* and literally hundreds of modern successes all built upon the same idea.

Now the purpose of all this discussion is not to induce the young writer to copy his plays. By no means. There is plenty of room for new ideas and originality. The point we want to make is this—don't think that you can't write about common everyday affairs because others have writ-

(Continued on page 11)

Some Needed Equipment for the High School Stage

by H. T. LEEPER

East Fairmont High School, Fairmont, W. Va.

TODAY, no one considers a high school stage adequately equipped that is supplied with only borderlights and footlights, any more than one would consider as adequate a director of school dramatics who had no training in his field. As dramatics is now beginning to receive the recognition it deserves as a school activity, it can no longer be expected to struggle along with makeshift and inadequate equipment, any more than can the athletic, manual arts, or other school departments. Nor are the size and shape of the stage and auditorium in school plants being built today matters left to chance or to builder's whims.

The effectiveness of a stage depends not only on its equipment, but also to a great extent on the planning that goes into its original construction. The following paragraphs will outline the minimum essentials for the school stage and its equipment.

The Stage

For an ideal high school stage the proscenium arch should be thirty feet wide and eighteen feet high. We start here because the other dimensions are calculated from the proscenium. Generally speaking, the height should be one-half to two-thirds the width. Greater height dwarfs the actors. A good stage is never less deep than the width of the proscenium, nor is it less wide than twice the proscenium width.

The height from the stage floor to the bottom of the grid should be three times the proscenium height, or in any event, forty to fifty feet, so there will be adequate mings are superfluous on the back-stage walls and may well be entirely eliminated. Especially should the back-wall be kept free from decoration, doors, steam pipes, supporting beams, or other fixtures of like nature. It should be kept flat and covered with a white, rough, sand-coated

Mr. Leeper is known to our readers as the editor of our department, "What's New Among Books and Plays." He received his training at Fairmont (W. Va.) State College and later at West Virginia University from which he holds an A. B. degree. He has been active in the work of The National Thespian Society for several years, and has taken a prominent part in school dramatics in West Virginia. For the past two years he has attended the Summer Sessions at Northwestern University.

surface so that it can be used as a cyclorama when needed.

The average high school director unfortunately often finds himself with a stage lacking some of the specifications mentioned above and can only remedy his situation as far as attached equipment is concerned.

Grid Equipment

The grid should have provision for a batten for every foot of depth. Battens should be made of 1 1/4" pipe or 1" x 4" clear white pine. If possible, a counterweight system should be used. On the first batten back of the act curtain should be hung a cloth teaser to mask off the top of the proscenium. Next should come the teaser light batten and then the first border light, or these may be combined into a light bridge. The teaser light batten serves as mounting for the spotlights, lighting up the up-stage acting areas. At least ten 400-w baby spotlights should be mounted on this teaser batten. One spotlight for every two and one-half feet of front would be a good estimate of the number needed. This batten should also have mounted on it two 500-w or 1000-w floodlights to furnish tonal lighting for the setting.

Borderlights are not used as a primary light source for acting areas, but are useful for blending the light from the spotlights. A borderlight should have at least three color circuits. Perhaps the best combination is red, blue, and green, as these can be mixed to make any color you wish. The borderlight should not extend clear

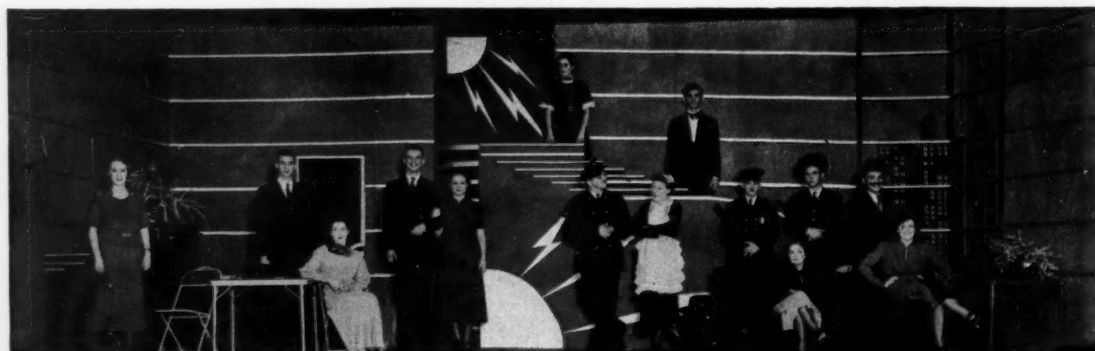
across the proscenium, but should be five to eight feet short of this length. The lamps in it should be 150 or 200 watts. Additional borderlights should be hung at intervals of eight feet, behind a cloth border in each case. If the back wall is to be used as a cyclorama a much stronger borderlight will be needed at the back of the stage to light it. This border light will have to be longer than those used for the acting area. If the back-wall is not available for use as a cyclorama, a white cloth "cyc" slightly wider than the proscenium may be hung in front of the back-wall instead. In either case provision must be made for lighting this cyclorama with any colors that may be needed here.

A large cloth cyclorama of dark material is always a useful and almost indispensable item of equipment. (This is not to be confused with the cyclorama just described). It should be mounted on a traveler about four feet in front of the back-wall. The traveler should take the cyclorama entirely off stage so as to leave the space clear when necessary. The side arms of the "cyc" should be mounted on travelers so they also can be taken off stage and out of sight quickly.

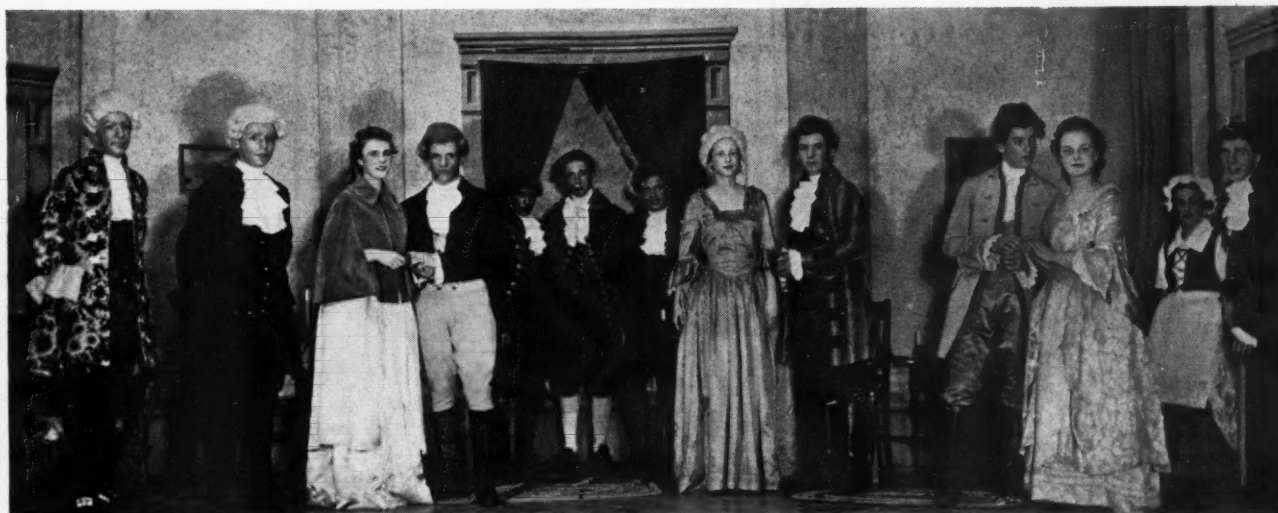
Cloth borders should be available at eight foot intervals, although a ceiling will probably be used on a majority of the sets. These borders should be six or eight feet high, depending on the angle of the sight lines from the front seats, and should be slightly less than the width of the proscenium.

Other Lights

Footlights are no longer given the importance they once were. They should be of relatively low brightness, with the lights small and close together so as to avoid shadows. There should be at least three color circuits. Footlights, like the borderlights, should not extend entirely across the proscenium width, but should stop three or four feet from each side. The light from them should be cast on



Stage set and cast for the production of *A FULL HOUSE*, given at Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Washington. Directed by Miss Lotta June Miller.



Cast for Goldsmith's *SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER* as presented by Thespians at Stambaugh (Michigan) High School. Directed by Miss Helen Dunham. (Costumes by Hooker-Howe).

the stage and not on the proscenium or the auditorium walls and ceiling. For this reason the stage should not have a big apron sticking out into the auditorium making proper footlight control impossible.

A vertical pipe should be mounted back of each tormentor, or a tormentor light tower used for the permanent mounting of two or three baby spotlights. They should be mounted at least eight feet high, as lower mounting will place them too near the faces of the actors.

The Switchboard

The switchboard should be located on the right of the proscenium at floor level. It should not be on the rear wall, a side wall, or on a balcony. The utmost flexibility is needed. That is, no circuit should be attached permanently to the board. Each circuit should end in a plug at the switchboard so that it can be plugged into a receptacle at any switch you wish. It goes without saying that the switchboard circuits should be fully equipped with dimmers.

A valuable item of equipment at the switchboard is a telephone that can be made to connect with another in a position in the rear of the auditorium. This will enable the director to talk to the switchboard operator during final rehearsals and enable him to make necessary corrections in the lighting without interrupting the actors or making constant trips back stage.

A small operating light should be placed so as to furnish ample light on the face of the switchboard, but it must be carefully shaded so it will not spill light on the stage. There should also be a place to hang up cue sheets so the switchboard operator may have his hands free to operate the switches.

A set of work lights should be provided on a circuit separate from the switchboard so that the stage can be lighted for stage work without using the more valu-

able lighting equipment set up for the play.

Four stage pockets in the floor should be available to serve as outlets for the portable equipment. These should be spaced around and back of or to one side of the acting area. It is wise to have two circuits in each, with two receptacles per circuit. These should be fifteen ampere receptacles. All receptacles, connectors, or plugs should be standardized at this size so they will be interchangeable. Such standardization will save a great deal of unnecessary and annoying changing of plugs from cable to cable.

Portable Equipment

In addition, the properly equipped stage will have as a minimum the following portable units to be mounted where needed as occasion demands:

Six to ten 400 watt baby spotlights. All should be of the same type so the fittings and color screens will be interchangeable.

Two 1000 watt spotlights.

Two olivettes.

Several standards for mounting at various heights.

All of the above portable lights should be available to both pipe mountings and floor standards.

In addition there should be two eight-foot three-circuit striplights for ground row lighting, and four or five three-foot striplights for use at entrances and windows.

Have enough No. 14 stage cable in 25, 50, and 100-foot lengths to connect these units in any needed combinations.

Altho not included with a list of absolute essentials, two Linnebach projectors will add distinct possibilities to your supply of equipment.

Beam Lights

To provide for proper lighting of the down-stage acting areas six spotlights should be mounted on the auditorium ceiling so that the light from them will

fall on those areas at a forty-five degree angle. The best way would be to have openings in the ceiling for these spotlights, but as this is not always possible, they may be mounted on a ceiling beam. To provide properly for cross-spotting, two of the spotlights should be mounted in the middle and two on each side. If it is impossible to mount them on a beam, a substitute location would be the sidewalls of the auditorium with one spotlight on each wall. Each spotlight should be carefully shuttered or equipped with funnels so no light will spill on the proscenium. The size of these spotlights will depend on their distance from the stage.

One more item must be added to the list of "musts", namely, heavy curtains for the auditorium windows. Windows without such equipment make light rehearsals in the daytime impossible, as well as daytime productions of any play that depends in the least on lighting effects, which is to say, most of them.

Scenery, generally speaking, has not been considered in this article, as it is taken for granted that each play will present a particular problem all its own which will be met by making over scenery on hand or building new.

It is regrettable to note the great number of high schools—even those that take their dramatics very seriously—that struggle along with inadequate stage equipment. Many not only do not possess the equipment listed above, but are in no position to obtain it immediately. Schools in this situation might well make out a list of needed equipment and set it up as a goal to work toward, purchasing the most needed items first. Even if they can afford only one additional piece of equipment each year, such a policy will be worth while, as in time the desired supply will be built up.

Elements of Dramatic Production

by EDWIN LYLE HARDEN,

Head, Department of English and Speech, New Braunfels (Texas) High School.

TRAINING in dramatics can be accurate, well-organized, and purposeful. Certain principles underlie the art, and certain technique of methods contribute to more accurate, effective, and generally satisfactory results. There are right ways and wrong ways of doing things in dramatics just as there are in any other activity, and anything less than the utmost excellence possible in performance is likely to defeat the educational purposes of the activity.

There are certain elements of dramatic production which are fundamental to the activity, and which, when properly analyzed, studied, practiced, and put into performance, will tend to produce more effective and satisfying results. When such elements as characterization, tempo, reaction and response, atmosphere, climax, transition, stage balance, pantomime, pause, interpretation, and emotional response are given the proper attention, the probability of the desired dramatic effect being created is increased measurably. These elements are present in all plays, and a study of the principles underlying each, the development of a correct technique in each, and the practice of actual scenes wherein one or more of them is predominant are activities that will contribute to the effectiveness of the performance of any play.

It is not the purpose of this article to deal with all of these elements, or to discuss any one in great detail, but rather only to illustrate the importance of a representative few of them. To begin with, for instance, we know that often a character's reaction by movement of facial expression conveys more meaning and conveys it in a more telling way than that which is being said or done at the time. It is what one does, as it were, when he is not doing anything, or what one says when he is not saying anything that reveals the intended meaning most accurately and effectively. Consider the importance of reaction and response in the scene from *The Merchant of Venice* wherein Shylock comes to court to collect his forfeiture from Antonio. The major interest here is decidedly the effect upon Shylock of what is being said and done—Portia's interpretation of the conditions of the bond, Gratiano's mocking, the Duke's decree—all of which so vitally affect Shylock upon whose reaction depends the dramatic effect of the scene.

The human emotions are many, varied, and often conflicting, and the problem of emotional expression is probably one of the most difficult in acting. In any one role the actor may be called upon to express fear, joy, agony, anger, and others, and he may find it necessary to sustain

Mr. Harden has a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska. He has also studied at the University of Iowa. He has taught in the high school at Valley City, North Dakota, and for the past nine years has been head of the Department of English and Speech at the high school of New Braunfels, Texas. Besides being a contributor to the "Texas Outlook," he is the author of the new book, "Practice in Dramatics," (Walter H. Baker), a review of which appears on page 31.

two of these major emotions which are in direct contrast. Joy in pain, anger in agony, and other such combinations are frequent. To do this without confusion or without allowing one to be submerged by the other requires skill and much practice. The closing scene of *The Sisters' Tragedy*, by Richard Hughes, requires the building up of an emotion to a climax with a quick transition at the conclusion. In the preceding action Lowrie has twice tried to choke her deaf-mute brother, Owen, to death in order to relieve her elder sister of the burden he places upon her so that she might marry. Finally she winds a tablecloth about his head and lets him stagger through the only exit which leads to a near-by pond into which he falls and drowns. She then tries to make herself believe that her act has been only a dream. Biting her hand to awaken herself and bring herself to reality, she then runs to the door and, in imagination, leads Owen to his chair as she has been accustomed to doing, saying, "I knew it was only a dream!"

Much of the effectiveness of a scene depends upon the grouping of characters with respect to the effect that is to be emphasized. The grouping often suggests subtle interpretations, and unless care is taken may sometimes even be inconsistent with the idea to be brought out. A stage is not necessarily balanced when the characters are equally distributed, although pictorial effect is desirable when it may be had without sacrifice of more important elements. Balance is a matter of weight of interest, relationship among characters, and the attitude of the characters. These elements constantly change throughout a play; consequently the grouping must change accordingly. The scene from *Ile* by Eugene O'Neill in which Joe, the harpooner, and several members of the crew come to Captain Keeney's cabin to threaten mutiny illustrates the fundamental principles of grouping. In the entire scene the sailors are arrayed against Keeney, and because of this opposition in thought element, Keeney and crew should occupy opposite sides of the stage regardless of the difference in number.

As has been said, the interpretation and presentation of plays make it necessary for the performer to display widely varied emotional expression, and the transitions from one emotion to another must sometimes be made rather abruptly. Practice of such scenes offers excellent training in control of the emotions and develops one of the most desirable qualities an actor can possess—versatility. An excellent example of a scene requiring skill in transition is to be found in *The Merchant of Venice*—the alteration of joy with sorrow which Shylock feels as he hears, from Tubal, the reports concerning his interests. In one breath Tubal tells him of Antonio's ill luck in having "an argosy cast away," and in the next breath he tells of Shylock's daughter having spent "in one night fourscore ducats." So on throughout the scene Shylock hears good news and bad news alternately.

The ability to use pantomime skillfully is a necessary and desirable talent for an actor to develop. A simple gesture, facial expression, bodily movement, or glance may reveal more character, or feeling, or convey an idea or a thought more forcibly than any amount of speaking could possibly do. Such exercises as presenting a characterization, or a scene, or rehearsing an entire one-act play in pantomime afford excellent practice in concentrating upon action, magnifying it, and making it accurate and vivid. Percival Wilde's one-character play, *The Previous Engagement*, provides fine material for such practice in the scene in which Hollister, who has recorded his proposal of marriage on a phonograph record, finishes playing it, sends it to his fiancée, pantomimes the delivery of it, her reception of it, and her reaction to it.

The pace or tempo with which a play, a scene, a part of a scene, or even a single speech is performed varies, depending upon the nature of the material; and the widest variety in rate of lines and action consistent with the nature of the material is to be sought for the most effective and pleasing impression. The entire play, *The Proposal*, by Anton Chekov, is a series of scenes of varying tempo. The scene in which Lomov comes to propose marriage to his neighbor's daughter, Natalya, begins on a moderate level and then increases in pace as a quarrel over the ownership of the "Meadows" develops, decreases upon Lomov's exit, increases again upon Natalya's father's entrance and subsequent discussion of the proposal, decreases upon Lomov's re-entrance, and finally increases to a still more rapid pace as a second quarrel develops about

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The German Theatre of Today

by DR. LESTER RAINES

Department of Speech, University of Alabama, University, Alabama

(Editor's Note: This is the second of several articles designed to acquaint high school students with the contemporary Theatre in other countries.)

DESPITE dire forebodings about the state of the theatre under the Hitler government, drama in Germany is flourishing. As the population has settled down from the political upheaval, so have interest in the theatre and fine achievement resulted. Berlin's theatres were the last to recover, as a number of leading actors were expelled when the party now in power took over the government. Since the majority of prominent Jewish theatre workers had established themselves in Berlin, the other cities suffered less disruption than did the capitol city.

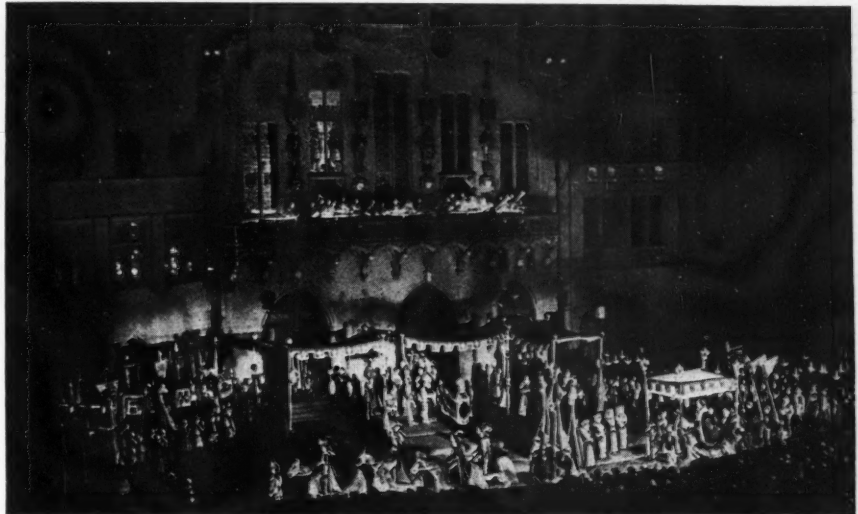
The theatre, however, is above the strife of partisan politics and carries on in spite of, or perhaps because of, political changes. The student must, of course, realize that Germany is under a different type of dictatorship than is Russia and its theatre naturally varies accordingly.

Germany is fortunately a country where there are state supported theatres, a condition dating back to monarchical days when various princes maintained theatre activities in their capitols. With the change to democracy and then to Fascism, the control and support of theatre activity merely changed to whatever the government might be.

Every state of any size in Germany has its governmentally owned and operated theatre as well as its opera house. Berlin has more than this number, while some of the smaller cities—Kiel, for example—have one building in which drama is played half the week, while the opera occupies the other half. Hence both theatre and opera are available to even the poorest citizen. Ticket brokers do not control the sale of tickets as in New York City. An organization of the party sponsors the purchasing of tickets *en bloc* for the season, assuring the producer of an audience and the audience of a group of tickets at vastly lower rates. The directors and staff form a permanent company for each theatre, which is run on the repertory basis with frequent changes of program.

The private theatres of Germany are still active and prosperous. Classic drama still has its place in the scheme of things. To a certain extent this has been brought about by the restrictions imposed on the theatre, but the work of new writers has a better chance than previously. When the German government becomes more tolerant of conflicting ideas, allowing their introduction in the theatre, the theatre of Germany may have a still brighter spot in the sun.

The National theatres of Germany are under the supervision of the state ministry



(Courtesy Dr. Lester Raines)

Coronation scene from *JUNGFRAU VOM ORLEANS*, staged in the out-of-door theatre in the historic old market place in Frankfort-Am-Main, Germany.

and are committed to a program of one-third classic, one-third modern, and one-third new plays. There has thus been permitted considerable folk drama, which has greatly improved the theatrical bill of fare.

Strange, and pleasing to our minds, Shakespeare was the favorite author of New York, London, Germany and Austria the past season. One London newspaper carried a clever cartoon of how great William would appear today, interviewed by the press, making personal appearances, welcomed by various dignitaries, and receiving honorary degrees! Twenty-one German theatres announced production of his plays, a number exceeding the 1935-

36 season when altogether 46 presentations were made. *Henry IV* was a great favorite, finding production at Breslau, Chemnitz, Dortmund, and Hamburg. Almost equally popular were *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, and *The Comedy of Errors*. The Playhouse at Frankfort-am-Main alone put on no fewer than five Shakespearean plays the past season.

One of the happiest improvements in the Berlin theatre is the reclaiming of the *Grosses Schauspielhaus* (Great Playhouse) where five years ago I saw a Reinhardt production with stages that revolved, slid in, raised and lowered, and

(Continued on page 12)



(Courtesy Dr. Lester Raines)

Scene from *KING LEAR* as staged in the State Theatre at Hamburg, Germany.

Clyde Fitch: America's First Cosmopolitan Dramatist

by PATRICIA RYAN

Director of Dramatics, Woodland (Washington) High School

(Editor's Note: This is the third of a series of articles dealing with major figures and tendencies in the theatre of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, written by the research students of the Division of Drama, University of Washington, under the direction of Prof. Glenn Hughes. Dr. George Savage, under whose editorial supervision these articles are being written, is a well known playwright and a member of the teaching staff at the University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.)

THE American theatre is very young, for most of its drama has been written since the Civil War. Until that time our stage was filled by traveling troupes of foreign actors who produced plays copied shamelessly from English, French, and German models. After the war, Bronson Howard, who is called "the Dean of American Drama", was influential in passing copyright laws which protected both the foreign and American authors from unjust exploitation. The native dramatists were given a chance to earn both fame and money by their writing.

Clyde Fitch developed social comedy to a higher point than it had yet reached, produced more plays of this type successfully than any other dramatist, and left American drama the richer because of his wit, cosmopolitanism, and finished dialog.

If you would read that beautiful War play of Southern romance called *Barbara Frietchie*, you would be interested to know that it was inspired by the love affair of Clyde Fitch's own father and mother. While his father, Lieutenant Fitch, was serving as a Union officer during the Civil War, he married Alice Maud Clark, a Southern belle, whose family were in sympathy with the North.

For many months the young couple were within the call of military demands. Then, scarcely a month after the surrender of Lee, on May 2, 1865, William Clyde Fitch was born.

He was a nervous and delicate child full of irresponsible spirits. In his nature was the conflict of two widely different forces which gave him a rich and varying nature. On one side, his background consisted of a conservative New England family which was one of the oldest in America; on the other side, of a Southern family which loved beauty and romance.

When Clyde was four years old, his family moved to Schenectady, New York. He found his childhood companions in the girls of his own age. He was the originator of many daring schemes and, as one of his playmates said, "A walk down the street with Clyde Fitch was an adventure". His inclinations toward writing and stage management became apparent during these early years. One of his

At the University of Washington, the Division of Drama, under the direction of Glenn Hughes, has built up the finest American Drama Collection in any western university. Through motion picture films, typed copies, inter-library loans, photostatic reproductions, and special purchases, the already adequate bibliography is supplemented for the needs of the individual student's research. Professor Hughes and the editors of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN think this material is so fresh, so complete, and so close to our dramatic life today that the findings of the research students should be made available not only to the future scholars in the field but to the wider public of those who will be working in the theatre of tomorrow.

Clyde Fitch was the victim of critical short-sightedness. His contemporaries got in the habit of labelling him trivial and superficial and they never realized their error. Actually, as later critics have been quick to point out, Fitch was not trivial, but charming and witty. He was not superficial, merely plausible and often quietly realistic. His contemporary critics considered his strong points his vices.

Today, fortunately, Clyde Fitch may be generally accepted as a cosmopolitan; a well-read, a well-travelled man of the world, who brought to a derivative and to a self-conscious American theatre a natural sophistication.

—DR. GEORGE SAVAGE.

youthful literary efforts bore the lurid title: *The Missing Hand, or Marie Gertrude Antoinette de la Rues: A Thrilling Tragedy a la Miss Goodrich*. In these early writings are many examples of the style which later became known to all theatre-goers in the United States and Europe.

As a student, Fitch was average: as a personality, he was startling and unique. William Lyon Phelps has written an interesting description of Fitch:

"He was unlike the normal boy in clothes, appearance, gait, manners, language and voice. No other youth would ever have dared to wear such clothes; they were indeed clean, without spot or blemish...but the radiance of these glossy garments almost hurt the unprotected eye, and they were cut in a manner that we would call futuristic....

"His gait was strange, the motive power seeming to dwell exclusively in the hips.... His face was impressively pale, looking as if it had never been exposed to the sun; this pallor was accentuated by hair both black and copious. His manners seemed absurdly affected until we found that they were invariable; he was never caught off his guard. His language, judged by schoolboy standards, was ridiculously mature; instead of speaking the universal slang, he talked English. His voice was very high, frequently breaking into falsetto, and even in ordinary conversation it sounded like that of an

hysterical woman who had just missed a train. "We thought he was effeminate, a molly-coddle, a sissy; we did not know that he had the courage of his convictions, and was thus the bravest boy in school...."

Fitch was always the same. In college, at Amherst, he was hazed, smoked out of his rooms and tricked because he insisted upon wearing a brilliant blue suit. The ridicule of his schoolfellows soon turned to respect as he stood the "gaff". He became a very popular member of the student body, particularly in the dramatic and literary departments. In his senior year he was producer, designer, and scene painter for the plays. He also played women's roles with such success that his contemporaries have never forgotten him.

After graduating from college in 1886, Fitch met with difficulties when he decided to follow a literary career. His father was very disappointed because Fitch would not study architecture and his mother wanted him to stay out of the theatre. Nevertheless, Fitch came to New York armed with several letters of introduction, the most important being to E. A. Dithmar, the dramatic editor of the *New York Times*.

After Fitch had established himself in fine lodgings, he was forced to work as a tutor in order to pay for them. He insisted upon travel and elegance at all costs, however. He began his annual trips abroad which he continued throughout his lifetime. He travelled from place to place every summer, enjoying the beauties around him, attending the European plays, writing two or three plays for the following season, and collecting *objects d'art*.

In 1889 when Richard Mansfield was looking for a man to write a play based on the life and character of Beau Brummel, Dithmar suggested Clyde Fitch. He was convinced that the young man was capable, for Fitch exhibited a fine feeling for the theatre, had originality and wit and experience in writing. Fitch's personality and taste fitted this subject particularly, for he was somewhat of a dandy himself.

After many difficulties and many months of hard work, *Beau Brummel* was produced on May 17, 1890. The play was a great success and remained in Mansfield's repertory all his life.

Fitch gained considerable prestige from this play, but it caused him a great deal of unhappiness soon after its first production. William Winter, a dramatic critic, published an article disclaiming Fitch's authorship of the play. A contro-



Philip Barry's *THE YOUNGEST*, staged by the Junior Class at Glenbard Township High School, Glen Ellyn, Illinois.
Directed by Mrs. Helen Peck Allen.

versy arose which soon died down, not, however, without leaving its permanent mark on the young dramatist. The critics afterward believe that he was insincere and judged his work lightly.

During the controversy, Fitch found solace only in his work. He produced plays and made many adaptations. Most of the plays written before 1900 were historical with the exception of *A Modern Match* (1892), his first social comedy and the type of play for which he is famous.

Until 1898 when *Nathan Hale* and *The Moth and the Flame* were great successes simultaneously, he had little success. From this time on, Fitch arose in fame until he became one of the foremost writers in America. In the nineteen years of his writing career, he produced about sixty-five plays, receiving \$250,000 annual return from his efforts. At his death he owned three beautiful homes which were decorated with works of art collected in Europe.

Fitch was the keen observer of everything around him. His plays were noted for their interesting scenes and details. The audience always expected the unusual in a Fitch play, and they were never disappointed. He brought stage realism a step forward in its development. He never missed rehearsal if he could possibly be present. He worried over every detail, coached his actresses and actors, and often rewrote parts to suit them. He developed the dialogue to a higher plane than it had yet reached in America. Drawing room scenes, which had formerly been handled clumsily, were polished, full of gay repartee, and contained all the best elements of the conversation of his day. Fitch, the cosmopolitan, who was at home in all the capitals of Europe, was the first American to develop successfully our social comedy.

The best characters in the Fitch plays were women. He had a keen understanding of feminine psychology, and was able to write this understanding into his characters. As a playwright, he launched many actresses on their careers by the excellent parts written for them. Among

the actresses which he helped to stardom were Julia Marlowe, Ethel Barrymore, Maxine Elliott, and Clara Bloodgood.

Fitch's principal characters were excellent people with one outstanding vice or fault. The conflict of these characters with other persons unable to understand such weaknesses was the theme of the plays. *The Truth* (1906) and *The Girl with the Green Eyes* (1902) were outstanding examples of his best writing.

Fitch will pass into theatrical history as one of the first American dramatists to possess distinctive wit, refinement, sophistication, and ability to observe closely the life about him. He often lacked a serious purpose in his plots, however, and made a mere convenience of them for the sake of detail, characterization, episode and stage business. In spite of his faults, his influence is still felt in the American theatre.

Elements of Dramatic Production

(Continued from page 8)

the relative merits of the dogs owned by Lomov and Natalya.

The emotional element of a play, of course, varies—its tensility increases or subsides in keeping with the nature of the scenes. However, in every play there is an outstanding scene in which interest and suspense reach the highest point. Often this climax is reached by a series of lesser climaxes which must be built up by appropriate means. A play already mentioned, *The Sisters' Tragedy*, affords a perfect example for illustration and practice of this building-up process. Just as Lowrie has worked herself up to the necessary emotional pitch to suffocate her deaf-mute brother with a cushion, she is interrupted by the entrance of her sister, Philippa. In a moment Philippa leaves and Lowrie attempts to strangle Owen with a tablecloth and is interrupted a second time by Philippa's re-entrance. Finally she locks all of the doors except the one leading to a near-by pond, throws the cloth over Owen's head and allows him groppingly to stagger to his death.

Each attempt of Lowrie's illustrates a lesser climax which builds up to the final point wherein she allows Owen to blunder out the door.

Such are some of the elements of dramatic production which are present in all plays, and which the writer believes are fundamental. He believes that if sufficient time and effort are devoted to their study and practice, more adequate and effective performance will result, and it may be safely said that the higher the quality of the performance the greater will be the educational value derived from the activity.

What a Publisher Wants in a Play He Accepts

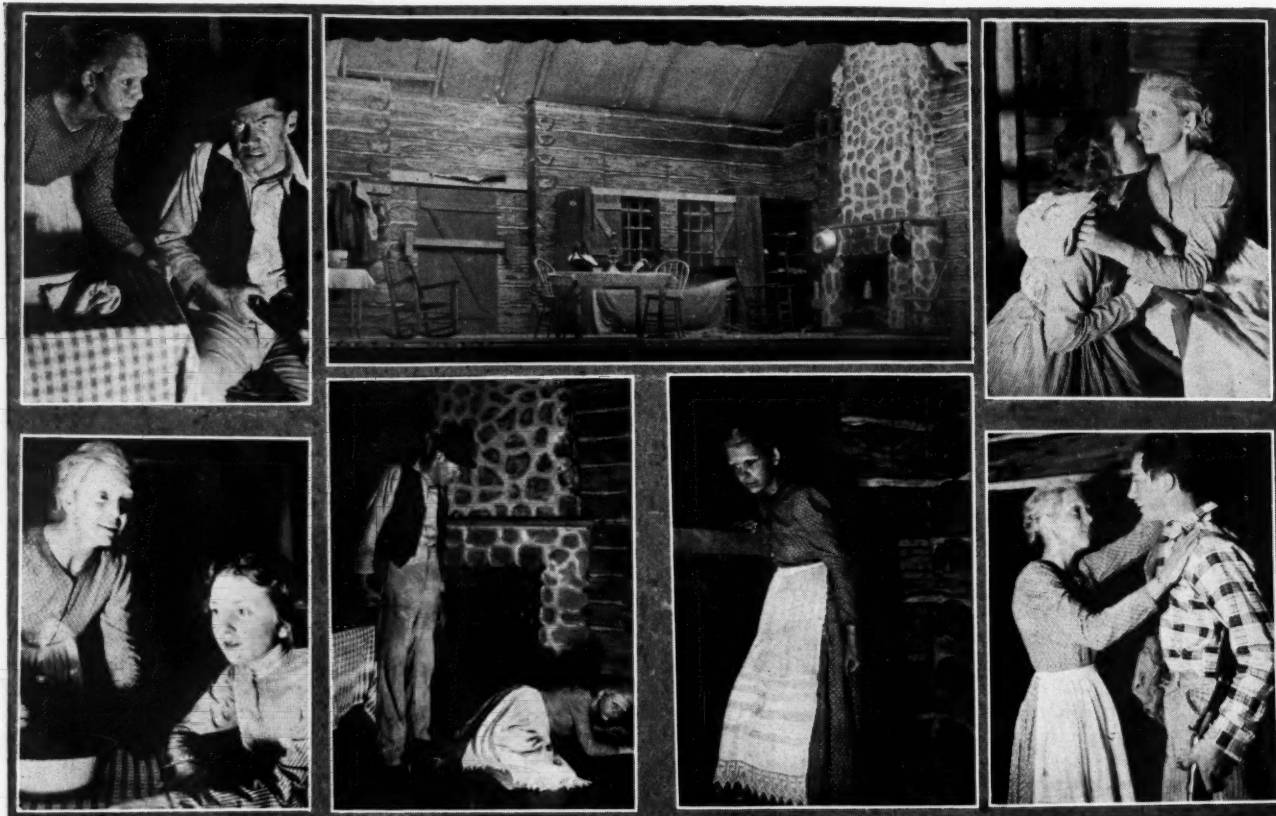
(Continued from page 5)

ten about them. Don't feel that you have to invent some extravagant situation that's outside all normal experience. The reason that original basic plots are few is that there aren't so many things that happen to normal individuals in the course of everyday life. And successful writers have found that it's the normal and ordinary that interests audiences.

Your chance for originality comes in the development of your sub and counter plots—in the by play and above all in characterization. Make every character distinct and alive. Here again, though, nature is the best teacher. Model your characters on actual human beings. Dress them with little peculiarities and quirks that you have noted in actual individuals that you have observed.

Work out your stage balance and movements carefully and accurately. This is the strictly mechanical side of the play but it is important. Don't think that it doesn't matter—that the director can work it out to suit himself or herself. You'd be surprised to know how easy it is to make serious errors and omissions in the directions. So be accurate—push buttons around on a paper stage plan if necessary. No director enjoys directing a play that calls for lines from an actor who hasn't entered and that instructs a player

(Continued on page 14)



Scenes from *ON VENGEANCE HEIGHTS*, winner of the Invitational One-Act Play Contest held at Salina, Kansas. Staged by Thespians from Newton (Kansas) Senior High School under the direction of Mr. S. B. Kurtz.

The German Theatre of Today

(Continued from page 9)

otherwise moved about the landscape. Three years ago the same theatre was deserted, stucco crumbling from its walls. Last year I was fortunate enough to secure tickets for two productions in a newly renovated house, now known as the Theatre des Volkes (Theatre of the People). One production was an operetta; the other a riotous *Taming of the Shrew*, utilizing all the facilities of the previous regime. The working folk were the audience, one of the most appreciative that ever witnessed the adventures of Petruccio and his Katarina. The donkey was led along a huge ramp forming a road from the bottom of the orchestra pit to the stage proper. The lusty, riotous production met with great favor.

At the *Volksbühne* in Berlin we found a satirical parody of the Bonus March of 1932 in *The March of the Veterans*. The treatment of a mythical army in a mythical European country was recognizable, even without a program note. The theatre, now federally controlled, was supported by a subscription audience similar to that of our own Theatre Guild. It still carries on with some of the best theatre work in Berlin.

Frankfort-am-Main since 1932 (Goethe Year) has seen huge municipal productions of the plays of Goethe and other

classical writers in the town square in front of the Römer, the historic town hall in which the boy Goethe saw the Electors choosing the Emperor. These open-air productions are now yearly spectacles of this commercial city. The Römer lends itself well as a background for pageant-like effects which attract huge crowds from all over the world. Goethe and Schiller are the favorite dramatists.

At Hamburg, with Heinz Daniel as chief scenic artist, we find the excellence of production unchanged. *Amphytrion*, or *The Gods Amuse Themselves*, is a popular play, as well as a popular film, all over Germany and Austria. The excellent photographs by Heinrich Haas make the Hamburg theatre visible to you. The director of the Hamburg State Theatre, Karl Wüstenhagen, may be seen in many of the Hamburg productions.

Cologne, cathedral city of the Rhineland, has three official theatres: one for opera, one for drama, and a third for puppets. The *Hanneschen* or puppets of Cologne are justly famed, and the tiny theatre is well attended by both children and adults. Direction in the Cologne theatres is excellent. Settings and staging are fully equal to any in Germany.

The student of *Theaterwissenschaft* (theatre knowledge) concerns himself chiefly with the historical phases of the theatre and secures his practical experience as an apprentice in one of the state theatres. He is unable to understand our

American university theatres or our high school dramatics courses. Cologne University, however, was quite proud of the fact that it had produced a play with a student cast and toured many cities. The common practices of our American dramatic departments were entirely foreign to their methods, and they envied our university groups as much as I admired their system of a national theatre.

The national theatre with several director-producers presenting the same play at the same time is of great value to the travelling student as he can compare and enjoy the same play under scenic conditions, with varying casts and under various directing geniuses.

Another feature of German and Austrian theatre life of inestimable value to the theatre student is the theatre museum in which records of past productions are assembled. Berlin, Kiel, Munich, Cologne and Vienne have particularly valuable collections, while the records of each state theatre yield items of interest to the research worker. Models, films, original designs and prompt books are incalculably valuable to the student who wished to delve into the theatre of the past. An American can only hope that some day we in America will have a truly national theatre, supported by federal funds, with our best actors, scenic designers, at a price where the humblest citizen can afford to enjoy the best in our country's drama.

Objectives of the High School Dramatic Club

by BETTY CATTRELL

Student Thespian, Troupe No. 6, Weir High School, Weirton, W. Va.

MORE than a third of our country's 24,000 high schools offer dramatic courses and twice that many have dramatic clubs. Dramatic work has become one of the leading creative activities of student groups, because it combines not only oral and written English, but also the work of art for stage design, music students for choruses and orchestras, domestic science students for costumes, and manual training groups for stage sets and "props." With a few exceptions, dramatics is not taught as a vocation. What are then the objectives behind the dramatic club?

The first objective is to develop stage assurance. By participation in club programs the students gain experience in speaking before groups of people and thus are less liable to "stage fright". Constructive criticism of the programs by the other members of the club are encouraged, with such subjects as poise, posture, diction, and preparation the chief topics of discussion. Faults in pronunciation and enunciation are pointed out; awkward movements, sloppy posture are severely criticized; and with this goes the teaching of elementary stage principles—how and where to sit, stand, move, and speak with the greatest effectiveness. This experience in speaking before audiences in club periods not only aids the student when they appear in major play productions, but also when they make book reports, in their class recitations, club meetings and in their social life, where speaking with ease and assurance is so important.

The second purpose of the dramatic club is to give the students actual experience in play-producing. Most clubs present one or more three-act plays to the public yearly, and usually several one-act plays for the school assembly or for special occasions. Every dramatic student is thrilled when he gets a part in one of these plays, and he soon finds out that "putting on a play" is much more than just a matter of learning the lines and rehearsing for three or four weeks. Stage managers with hammers and saws get to work erecting scenery; electricians fuss with switches and wires to get the proper lighting effects; property managers scour the town for just the right kind of lamps and rugs, chairs and bookcases, pictures and curtains and vases; budding journalists scratch out newspaper articles intended to entice the townspeople into the auditorium on the night of the play; the art department sets about making the programs; the less fortunate members of the club (who haven't been given anything else to do) try to sell enough

tickets to insure a full house—and the director of the play usually acquires a few gray hairs. Producing a play calls for team-work and cooperation, patience, perseverance, and self-control—all of which are valuable attributes in life.

Third, the dramatic club tries to develop an appreciation of the theatre. Current plays are discussed; reviews and articles are read; actors and actresses are studied. Where it is possible, dramatic clubs often sponsor theatre parties so that the students may actually see and enjoy the outstanding dramas. Because the stage is flesh-and-blood, it has a great appeal; dramatic clubs can bring the students to an appreciation of this fact.

Fourth, the dramatic club brings the theatre to the community. In 1890 the Grand Opera or the Town Hall was

packed to capacity when a traveling show came to town presenting such attractions as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *East Lynne*, or *Love Will Find a Way*. But with the development of the motion pictures these traveling shows practically disappeared. Every "road" venture became a gamble, and now the Broadway productions that do go on the road play for only a short time in a few of the larger cities. So the high school dramatic clubs are doing an excellent job of bringing the theatre back to the community, and it is a profitable experience for all concerned.

These, then, are the four fundamental purposes of the dramatic club. They are surely worth while, otherwise dramatics would not have reached the outstanding place it now holds in the activities of our high schools.

The Plays We Want

(Continued from page 4)

ters than male. We think that we are voicing the sentiments of almost all high school dramatic directors when we make this plea. Past experience has proved to us that approximately seventy per cent of the students interested in play production are girls. This, of course, is not true everywhere, but we dare say that in ninety per cent of our high schools it is the case. Lamentable? Yes; but what are we to do about it and be absolutely fair to the girls, if we do not select plays with the seventy-thirty distribution of male and female characters?

We want our plays to be entertaining, artistic, and educational. But, on the other hand, we must remember the prime object of high school dramatics; and that is nothing more or less than the training derived therefrom. We would love to produce *Journey's End*, *The Queen's Husband*, *To The Ladies* and several other equally fine plays; but we cannot do it and still be fair to the potential Portias and Hedda Gablers in our school. We even feel that we should steer clear of Shakespeare for no other reason than we know it would be unfair to the girls.

Those, then, are the two main pleas we would make to our publishers and authors—for more youthful characters, and for a larger percentage of female characters in more plays.

We in the larger schools would appreciate more plays with larger casts. Sometimes we have as many as a hundred and fifty students to try out for one play. It seems a shame to be able to give only ten or twelve of them a chance to display their abilities. We need more plays with twenty to thirty characters in the casts. Of course, more characters mean more responsibility on the part of the director. But after all, the main objective is to give as many students a chance as is feasibly possible. We would not have the number of small plays reduced; rather we plead for more plays with large casts.

The question of royalty, too, is always

The Frederick B. Ingram—Thespian

PLAYWRITING CONTEST

Here is your chance to find out whether you can write what the public wants. For the best one-act play submitted, in the opinion of the judges, by a member of The National Thespian Society between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two, Frederick B. Ingram Publications offer the following award:

1. A complete library set of 1 copy of each of Ingram's Printed Plays.
2. Publication of the winning manuscript, all expenses to be borne by Frederick B. Ingram Publications, the author to receive twenty-five per cent of all royalties received from its presentation.

Requirements

All entries must comply with the following requirements:

1. Manuscripts must be typewritten, double spaced, on only one side of the paper, with pages numbered.
2. Each contestant is limited to one manuscript.
3. The play must be in one act, the playing time being between twenty and thirty minutes.
4. Evidence of Thespian membership together with the age of the contestant must be submitted with each manuscript in the form of a letter from the Troupe sponsor.
5. The editorial staff of Frederick B. Ingram Publications shall act as judges and their opinion shall be final.
6. No rejected manuscript will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope.
7. All rights to the winning play are to be assigned and will be the property of Frederick B. Ingram Publications who are making this award.
8. Address all entries to Frederick B. Ingram Publications, Gansert Bldg., Rock Island, Illinois.

Contest closes June 1, 1937

a prime object with us. We realize, of course, that the ones who give us our plays must charge royalties in order to make the business profitable. But we believe, on the other hand, that the large volume of book sales which will naturally come when the ideal plays are

published will enable the publisher to charge lower royalty rates and thereby make the financial end of the business more satisfactory to us who produce the plays. To our mind the only perfectly fair royalty plan is that which is based on a percentage of the box office receipts.

PROJECT FOR CREATIVE WRITING OF PLAYS

Announced by United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission

(Editor's Note: The HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN is gladly cooperating with the U. S. Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission in the distribution of information pertaining to the Commission's project for the writing, among high school and college students, of plays and pageants suitable for presentation during the Constitution Sesquicentennial Celebration. Further information regarding the contests announced below may be secured from the Hon. Sol Bloom, Director General, 524 House Office Building, Washington, D. C.)

PRINCIPAL FEATURES

Purpose of the Dramatic Writing Contests

To create an interest through creative writing in the purpose and plans for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Constitution of the United States.

To assemble through these contests a body of dramatic material to be presented during the celebration.

Types and Scope of the Dramatic Writing Contests

Project for high school juniors and seniors, the writing of one act plays.

Contest for college students, the writing of a one-act play or one of several scenes.

Organization of Contest

State Contest Committees to conduct contests in writing one-act plays for high school juniors and seniors.

Regional Committees (each to include several States) to conduct contests for college students and adults.

Judges to rate material upon its suitability for presentation as part of the Constitution Sesquicentennial Celebration in addition to its dramatic interest, excellence in writing, and ability.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR ALL CONTESTS

1. Since it is important that the information used in the dramatic writing contests be accurate, a bibliography is being issued by the United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission to aid contestants in their search for material.

2. Page 1 of each manuscript submitted shall bear the title and the number of pages of manuscript; page 2, the cast of characters, date of action, and setting; page 3, the beginning of the play.

3. All manuscripts must be typewritten on only one side of 8 in. x 11 in. paper. Stage directions should be in red or enclosed in parentheses and underlined.

4. Contestants must state in writing and sign the following: "This play is my original production and is not copied from any source except as indicated by footnotes."

5. A sealed envelope attached to each play must contain (1) the name; (2) school affiliation, if any; (3) class or position; and (4) home address of the writer. These must be countersigned by a teacher or principal of the school, in the high school and college contests. Manuscripts may be returned from the State or regional committees only when there is included a stamped, self-addressed

envelope in which the manuscript may be mailed.

6. From the prize-winning plays and pageants will be chosen those to be made available for production through publication by the United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission. These will be copyrighted in the name of Sol Bloom as Director General, for the period of the celebration and during that time no royalty may be charged. At the termination of the celebration, the copyright and royalty rights belong to the author. A statement to this effect will be published on all dramatic material.

HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

1. Any bona fide high school junior or senior in public, private, or parochial high school may compete.

2. Each high school may enter one play in the State contest, choosing the best from the elimination contest in the local school.

3. Plays should have a probable playing time of not less than 20 minutes or more than 30 minutes. (One page of double spaced typewritten script plays about one minute.)

4. All plays must be submitted to the State Committee not later than April 16, 1937.

5. The United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission will award the Constitution Commemorative Medal in silver to the winner of first place in the State contest; the Constitution Commemorative Medal in bronze to the winner of second place; and a certificate of Merit to the winner of third place.

6. The play awarded first place in each State contest will be sent to the United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission. See No. 6—General Regulations.

COLLEGE CONTEST

1. Any bona fide student in an institution of higher learning is eligible to enter a play of one act, with a probable playing time of not less than 20 minutes or more than 30, or a play of several scenes, with a probable playing time of not less than 45 minutes or more than an hour. (One page of double spaced typewritten script plays about one minute.)

2. Each institution of higher learning may enter one play which must be sent to the Regional Committee not later than April 16, 1937.

3. Those ranking first in the regional contests will be awarded the Constitution Commemorative Medal in silver; those ranking second, the Constitution Commemorative Medal in bronze, and those ranking third, a Certificate of Merit.

4. The manuscripts awarded first place in regional contests will be entered in the national contest and judged by the national Jury of Awards.

5. The United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission will award to the winner of the college and university national play contest a Shrine of the Constitution.

6. For publication of plays see No. 6—General Regulations.

This plan enables the smaller schools to present the better plays without a constant fear that a performance on a rainy night will show them in the debt column.

My last plea is for shorter full-length plays. No matter how good a play is, the average audience watching the average amateur performance begins to tire after the two hour mark is past. We truly believe that every minute over two hours in a high school play performance detracts rather than adds to the entertainment. This statement also includes within the two hours all the intermissions necessary. It might be a good plan for all playwrights who write for high school consumption to set a maximum of thirty-five minutes for each act. A twenty or twenty-five minute maximum for the last act, we believe, would be appreciated by all parties concerned.

Maybe the ones from whom we secure our plays will feel that we are wrong in our demands, and that we are speaking for ourselves rather than the mass of high school directors. If this be so, then we suggest that they send a rather full questionnaire to a representative group of us and find out for themselves. We wonder that this has not been done before, anyway. After all, we are the consumers; why should we not demand what we want?

(A questionnaire such as is suggested in Mr. Sam's article will be conducted by The National Thespian Society this spring and the results will be made known next fall.—Editor.)

What a Publisher Wants In a Play He Accepts

(Continued from page 11)

to sit down three times without telling him to rise once.

Above all we've found that plays must be clean and wholesome. They don't have to teach a strong moral lesson, though there's no more effective instrument for education than the stage. When a lesson is involved, it must not run away with the play and "preach". One must always remember that the play is primarily intended for entertainment. While *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is considered one of the greatest influences in abolishing slavery, the fact that for over fifty years no season went by without at least one *Uncle Tom* company on the road was due not to its lesson but to the fact that it was smashing good entertainment. The play dare not be didactic, but YOU have told us definitely that it must be clean. It's interesting to note that the high school players have done more toward elevating and improving the drama in a few short years than the most powerful board of censors could do in a century.

Remember, then, when next you take part in or attend a play in your school, that as you express your approval or disapproval of it, your voice is one of the many that make up the great voice that tells the publisher what he wants in the play he accepts.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

FOR THE BUSY DIRECTOR

EDITED BY MARGARET L. MEYN

Material appearing in this department is selected with the hope that it proves helpful to the busy director of dramatics. The editor will welcome short contributions of a practical nature concerning problems of acting, staging, and directing.

Practical Hints on Painting and Mixing



MISS MEYN

TO begin with, in painting, dry paint or powder mixed with water is best for scenic purposes. Dry paint may be purchased at any hardware store. For saving purposes, figure out approximately the colors that will be used and buy paint in large quantities to assure better

price.

In mixing paint for tinting purposes, white dry paint is effective. For example, if lavender is desired, the three colors, red, yellow, and blue, mixed with white will produce the desired shade. From one to two quarts of dry powder mixed with the proper amount of water will make a gallon of paint. Approximately two-fifths paint should be in dry color with water added. Paint should have the ordinary consistency of coffee cream. If too watery, the paint doesn't cover the surface well, and if it is too thick, the paint chips off more easily.

For convenience in mixing large quantities of paint, it is well to have an adequate place to keep paint supplies. Garbage cans of the four gallon type are useful. A nice paint rack for keeping dry colors can be made out of a piece of pipe, with space between the cans to fasten garbage pails, with solid pins to hold each one in place.

To cover an ordinary set, 24 ft. wide, 14 ft. high, 16 ft. deep, one and one-half buckets to four gallons of paint will be needed for the prime coat or sizing. With this, use one cupful of glue per gallon of paint. In order to mix the sizing that is used, only whitening and glue are necessary, with twice as much glue. Two cupfuls per gallon of paint will give a good coat or filter.

Methods of Painting

Each painter has his own technique in painting. However, here are five common types of painting that can be used successfully in making attractive settings:

The first method is that of taking an old rag, dipping it into the paint, then wringing it, and slapping it around on the set. Secondly, is that of the RAG STIPPLE, in which, by taking a rag, and

running it into a roll, and then rolling it around on the set, a pleasing effect is created. The third method is classified as the SPONGE STIPPLE, and requires a small piece of light sponge, which is dipped into the paint and then daubed on the surface of the flat according to the effect desired. Various colors may be used in this method according to the design wanted. In the fourth method, that of SPATTER STIPLING, drops of paint are thrown by means of a brush, all over the set. Easiest brush to use is one about four inches in length with good, long bristles. The brush is held between fingers, and the size of the flecks of paint will depend on amount of paint on the brush. Caution must be taken not to stand too close to the set. A good distance to stand away from the set is about 3 to 3½ feet back, and then the paint can be shot on the set, and spattered at different angles. Use two or three colors in the stipple as the drops will catch the light used on the set and create an interesting effect. If, for example, you want a stucco appearance, spatter stipple with lots of paint on your brush, and give lots of paint on the surface. The last method is perhaps the most interesting, that of SCUMBLING. Here two or three colors are used to blend on the surface when wet. The set must be up when scumbling.

Going into detail on the scumbling method, stencils are made for various patterns wanted on the set. For instance, wall paper may be represented by the use of stencil cut out of cardboard and shellacked. When the stencil is cut, care must be taken to save the important elements of the pattern. Stick down with gummed paper and shellack if you should lose pieces. In using different stencils for the pattern effect, use darker paint around the edges, and blend in with the lights and still lighter at the center. It should never be uniform at any time. While still wet, blend together the third color. In the play, *Tragedy of Man*, dark blue, light gray, light green and yellow were used for scumbling effect. Scumbling gives a rough appearance. An air gun is used for spraying over the stencil on the set. When using the air gun, strain paint through cheese cloth first. A hand spray can be used, but it is a much slower process. Another interesting feature can be worked out with stenciling, namely, that of molding represented on the set. Paint a brown streak first along the upper edge, then run a line of yellow. When the light strikes it, the yellow will cast a shadow. The light shadow represents high light and gives three dimensions. The dark lines represent shadow and will give the molding form. A regular wood base may be represented by applying a base color, and taking a dry brush and brushing lengthwise to represent the grain of the wood.

These are just a few of the easy methods of making attractive sets by application of dry paint in the various colors for designs on sets.

MOVIES

We Have Seen

SCREEN NEWS

- * Poor—don't throw your money away.
- ** Average—if you don't have much, miss it.
- *** Good—it is worth the admission fee.
- **** Excellent—borrow money if necessary.

*****Rembrandt*. As a creator of biographical dramas, Charles Laughton's masterpieces of screen technique are unquestionably the best we have seen. In his latest role, that of Rembrandt, the great Dutch painter, Mr. Laughton gives a superb characterization played with delicate artistry and finished dramatic treatment. *Rembrandt* is an inspired drama in which acting and directing reach a new high point. You will find this film superbly interesting. Charles Laughton again shows us that he is the screen's foremost actor.

***Camille*. A stuffy film much over-rated by the advanced publicity from Hollywood. The directing is weak, the story lacks freshness, and the acting is only mediocre. We feel that Dumas has reasons to turn over in his grave. Greta Garbo and Robert Taylor as a team hold no fascination for us. Neither give any ways near the type of performance one is led to expect. The picture is dead, monotonous, lacking in comedy relief, and devoid of any dramatic excitement. If you must know *Camille*, see the stage play, or read the novel; the screen version offers little for your money.

****Craig's Wife*. This is a film adapted from George Kelly's Pulitzer Prize play of the same name. Although it is not one of those pictures which is preceded by the customary avalanche of publicity, *Craig's Wife* is a picture you will remember. Rosalind Russell interprets the role of the wife who was "crazy about her home" with unusual skill, and the same can be said of the other players, John Boles, Billie Burke, and Alma Kruger. We did not like Rosalind Russell's artificial eyelashes. If you have not done so already, read the stage play before you see this picture.

****One in a Million*. Sonja Henie, the Norwegian skater, makes her screen debut in this picture, obviously planned to accommodate her unusual talents. We feel, however, that her acting is far superior to her skating. Sonja Henie has a winning personality, photographs exceedingly well, and we feel that we will see much more of her work as an actress in the days to come. *One in a Million* has not much of a story to tell, but you will find it excellent entertainment. The music and comedy teams are very good.

****Romeo and Juliet*. This is unquestionably the most successful of the several Shakespearean plays produced for the screen in recent years. The story of the lovers of Verona is beautifully and authentically told in the phraseology of Shakespeare and Hollywood has spared nothing to give us a truly artistic picture of life and manners of the thirteenth century. Leslie Howard is not exactly our conception of Romeo, but he plays his part exceedingly well. Norma Shearer gives the role of Juliet a touching and sympathetic interpretation which is adequate. The best individual acting is done by John Barrymore in the part of Mercutio. Basil Rathbone as Tybalt and Edna May Oliver as the Nurse give excellent performances. Talbot Jennings' adaptation of the Shakespearean text is highly commendable.

WE HOPE TO SEE:

The Good Earth. The popular novel by Pearl Buck has Luise Rainer, Paul Muni, and Walter Connolly in the cast.

Lost Horizon. A picture which bears the direction stamp of Frank Capra is always a promising one. Ronald Colman, Edward Everett Horton, and Jane Wyatt have the leading parts in this film, based upon the novel by James Hilton.

The Ambling Thespian

by EARL W. BLANK

Thespian National Director and Director of Dramatics at California State Teachers College, California, Penn.

Congratulations to the Katharine Cornell Troupe of Drumright, Okla.



MR. BLANK

I AM glad to see another troupe join the ranks of theatrically named groups. You have made a splendid choice, a name that stands for high ideals in the theatre.

Hamlet's Speech to the Players

Florence Fisher Parry, a well-known dramatic critic and former actress, recently made the statement in her column in one of the Pittsburgh papers that the stage needed to practice more the admonitions of Hamlet in his speech to the players. I do not feel it is amiss to repeat this speech which is found in Act Three, Scene Two. Here it is: "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but to use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwigged fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it." I have repeated the first part of the famous speech here rather than refer you to it because I know from my own experience that it is easy to forget to look up a reference. The radio is demanding better diction every day. The above advice holds good today and every dramatic group may well use Hamlet's speech as a motto. The above speech can be used as an excellent exercise in diction. Every student actor should memorize it.

My Play Choice for This Issue

Icebound by Owen Davis, Longmans, Green and Company, New York City. Royalty, \$25.00. 1 interior—5 men, 1 boy (can be played by a high school boy), 6 women.

This is an excellent play for the winter season. Its title is good for winter advertising; its theme is fitting for the cold season. It is a Pulitzer Prize winner. It

can be simply staged. I staged it in screens. It is very dramatic with many comedy relief lines. The little boy adds novelty to the action. The theme is selfishness. The play carries a wonderful message for everyone. It shows that the only way to real happiness is to conquer selfishness or to be unselfish in the first place. Every dramatic group can well afford to consider this play at some time.

A Stagecraft Suggestion

Students can gain much satisfaction and valuable experience by modelling sets. A shoebox can be used for the stage. The stage can be modelled to scale—a half inch to the foot or an inch to the foot. If the model is scaled according to the proportions of the large stage your students use all the better. I suggest having the Industrial Arts boys blueprint the stage and then have the students make their little models according to this scale as I first suggested. It teaches accuracy and is far more interesting. The Warren Paper Products Co. of Lafayette, Indiana, sell the Ten-cent stores paper toy furniture which I have had students use successfully in modelling furniture. Do not use the toy furniture except as patterns. Different sets of furniture can be bought. Flats can be made of stiff paper or card-board. Water colors or crayons can be used for painting the model flats.

An Excellent Example of Artistic Loyalty

When a director will take off valued vacation time to cross the Atlantic to direct a show because he has a feeling of interest and loyalty for a school of which he was at one time department head, I feel it should be given public mention. B. Iden Payne, world-famous director of the Shakespeare Stratford-on-Avon Theatre, has done that thing recently when he came over to direct Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* for the drama department of Carnegie Institute of Technology. And what an inspiration that must have been for the drama students and especially for those students who were fortunate enough

Correction

The word "action" was erroneously used in place of the word "acting" in Mr. Blank's article, "A Grading Method for Plays Produced by Student Directors," published in our November-December issue.

to act under Mr. Payne's direction or work on the technical staff of the show or even to watch rehearsals.

To Cure Your Ego

For some reason or other student actors are apt to get excessively egotistical if they are successful in some play. I feel this is one of the greatest weaknesses of play production and it makes me unhappy that this should be so because it gives a bad reputation to the field. It is an art to keep one's head during the period of success. Perhaps the following item which I have pasted in one of my notebooks will help to keep someone on an even keel and thereby make him or her more charming. The quotation is from the magazine "Humanity". "The cure of egotism is knowledge. Some dark night go out under the quiet vault of heaven and lift up your eyes to the broad belt of stars which you were taught in childhood to call the 'Milky Way'. Do you know that every point of light in that twinkling band is a gigantic sun around which revolves millions of worlds similar perhaps in many respects to our own earth? Do you know that the nearest of these suns is more than 5,000,000,000,000 miles from us and that a ray of light travelling 186,000 miles per second, would require more than 1,000 years to travel from the nearest point in the Milky Way to this earth? What is man that thou, O God, are mindful of him?"

"And yet how awfully puffed up we sometimes become! A little money or a little power, and many a man thinks he is the center of the solar system." This quotation has proved inspirational to me and it seemed a shame not to pass it on.

Mrs. Simpson

Since I seem to be devoting most of this column in this issue to the improvement of one's speech and personality, I shall mention along with all the other publicity about Mrs. Simpson who is the world's most talked about woman at present the fact that all the publicity concerning her has almost always mentioned that the secret of her success is her great poise and charm. Dramatics is the greatest poise and charm developer there is.

My Book Choice for This Issue

The American Method of Voice Development, by Juan Carlos Maclean. Published by Maclean College, Kimball Hall, Chicago, Illinois. Price \$0.80.

Dr. J. C. Maclean is an internationally famous voice teacher and singer. Some years ago Dr. Maclean received national recognition for his research in the field of voice science. He is the originator of the American Method. This book is a very practical manual for the voice teacher and student. The exercises are concrete and not theoretical. They are very simple. This book is a condensed version of Dr. Maclean's vast studies in the field of voice development. I heartily recommend it to everyone interested in good diction and in a pleasing voice.



Stage set for the presentation of *NEW FIRES* as produced by Mrs. L. E. Creel at Sheffield (Alabama) High School.

HERE AND THERE

The production schedule this year for The Rye High School, Troupe No. 222, of Rye, New York, includes the presentation of *The Queen's Husband*, *H. M. S. Pinafore*, and *The Swan*. Thespians of this school planned early in the season to see the following Broadway plays: John Gielgud's *Hamlet*, *Idiot's Delight*, and *Reflected Glory*. Mr. Don T. Brennan is sponsor.

A comedy in three acts entitled *Midsummer Madness*, by Lindsey Barbee, was staged by Miss Kathryn Rackley on November 10 at Vidalia, Georgia, High School. Miss Rackley is sponsor for Troupe No. 320 recently organized at this school.

Three recently organized alumni troupes of The National Thespians are: *The Troupers* of River Forest, Illinois, composed of graduate members of Troupe No. 306 of Trinity High School, River Forest, Illinois; *The Thespian Footlighters* of Tampa, Florida, composed of graduate members of Troupes Nos. 321 and 147 of Plant High School and Hillsborough High School respectively; and *The Footlighters* of Clarksburg, West Virginia, composed of graduates from Troupe No. 181 of Roosevelt-Willson High School of the same city.

The Man in the Bowler Hat was taken out on an out-of-town Intra-school Dramatic Meeting this fall by members of Troupe No. 235 of Ellenville, New York, High School, under the direction of Miss Grace Everest.

Shaw's play, *Arms and the Man*, was staged late in November by the Department of Dramatics at Austin (Texas) Senior High School, under the direction of James R. Burton. Mr. Burton's entry in the Texas One-Act Play Contest last year was awarded first place. Troupe No. 120 of The National Thespians is located at this high school.

National Thespians of Morgantown (W. Va.) High School presented Martin Flavin's play, *Children of the Moon*, to a capacity audience on Friday, November 20th. The play was directed by Miss Dorothy Stone White. Mr. Clyde Harner was stage manager.

The well known poem by Sir Walter Scott, *Lochinvar*, was printed in full on the play program for the three-act comedy, *Enter Henry Lochinvar*, staged as the senior class play at Brownsville (Pa.) High School, in November. The production was under the direction of Jean Donahey, sponsor for Troupe No. 187.

A crowd of approximately two hundred and fifty people, consisting of teachers from the high school and grade schools and parents and friends of high school students, attended an open meeting of Troupe No. 28, at Florence, Colorado, on October 14. As a result of this publicity, the sale of tickets for the school plays has been larger this year than it has been for the past five years. The meeting was under the supervision of Miss Augusta J. Kimpton, troupe sponsor and Thespian Regional Director for Colorado. This unusual program was an outcome of a Suggested Troupe Program, copies of which were sent to all troupes early in the year.

A most interesting and attractive program was designed and edited by Miss Mildred Lewis, a junior student at Champaign (Ill.) Senior High School, for the school production of an original operetta written by Mr. Sol Cohen, music director; Miss Marian Stuart, director of dramatics; and Miss Amy Beach, instructor in German.

The Thirteenth Chair was staged as the Senior Class play at Clayton (Mo.) High School, on November 19 and 20. The play was staged by Mr. Blandford Jennings, sponsor for Troupe No. 322.

Skidding was produced as the first major play of this season at Fairmont (Minn.) High School, under the direction of Miss Marjorie Hjelmervik, who sponsors Troupe No. 261. *Grandma Pulls the Strings*, *Dust of the Road*, *'Op 'O Me Thumb*, *Trifles*, and *Gloria Mundi* are five one-act plays which this school is producing this year.

Thespian Performs on Broadway

Miss Margaret Miller, a member of Troupe No. 73 of Manistee (Mich.) High School, was selected as one of a small group this past summer to dance at the Roof Garden, St. Regis Hotel, in New York City. In the fall of 1935, Miss Miller became a member of the Corps de Ballet in the stage spectacle, *The Great Waltz*, staged by the well known producer, Max Gordon.

While in high school, Miss Miller participated in both dramatics and dancing. After her graduation, she attended the Albertina Rasch Dancing Academy in New York City where she has continued her study for the past few years. Critics have spoken highly of her work, and see a brilliant career for her. We send Miss Miller our congratulations and wish her continued success.

Among Our Directors

Miss Mildred A. Nelson has succeeded Mr. Arthur Hays as director of dramatics and Thespian activities at Mission (Texas) Senior High School.

Miss Josephine Alvanese is now in charge of dramatics and Thespian activities at Pottsville (Pa.) High School.

Troupe No. 184 of Bloom Township High School, Chicago Heights, Illinois, has a new sponsor in the person of Mrs. Edna Hansen North, who succeeded Mr. Theodore Little in the fall.

Miss Ila Grace Hagie has succeeded Miss Alice McCollum as director of dramatics and sponsor for Troupe No. 195 at Fort Benton (Mont.) High School.

The Enemy, by Channing Pollock, was staged before a very appreciative audience at Chippewa Township High School, Doylestown, Ohio, on December 16. *Tiger House* was produced in November. Both plays were under the direction of Miss Bernice M. Althaus, who now is sponsor for the newly organized Troupe No. 167. A cast of well-trained actors under the direction of Miss Althaus won first place last spring in the first One-Act Play Contest for the High Schools of Northeastern Ohio held at Kent State University.

Dear Brutus, by Sir James Barrie, was produced under the direction of Mr. Vincent Raines at Tuscaloosa (Ala.) High School, on November 24.

Troupe No. 250 at Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Washington, held a joint Thespian initiation-Christmas party on December 23. All activities were under the supervision of Miss Lotta June Miller, Thespian Assistant National Director.

The World We Live In, by Capek, was staged on November 12 as a joint production of Troupe No. 318 and members of Delta Psi Omega at Dodge City, Kansas, under the direction of Miss Maxine Nevins, Thespian sponsor, and Miss Geneva Herndon of Dodge City Junior College.

"The Pierrot Troupe (No. 254) of The National Thespian Society" is the new name officially registered with the national office by the Thespians of B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass., sponsored by Miss Barbara Wellington.

On the College Stage

The purpose of this department is to furnish high school directors and students with news regarding the most significant events occurring in dramatics among colleges and universities. Articles appearing below are published through the courtesy of *Alpha Psi Omega*, a national dramatic honorary collegiate fraternity, and *Delta Psi Omega*, a national honorary drama society for Junior Colleges.

University of Alabama

The thrilling drama, *Yellow Jack*, which is taken from the stirring "Walter Reed" chapter of Paul de Kruif's immortal book, "Microbe Hunters," was staged under the direction of Dr. Lester Raines at the University of Alabama, on December 9 and 10. Presented under the auspices of the The Blackfriars, university dramatic organization, the play was the first presentation of its kind to be given in the modern manner. Staged on levels, the drama was presented with unique effect upon the audience. The atmosphere for the 29 scenes in which the play is divided was intensified by the use of realistic sound effects.

On December 15, the faculty made its dramatic debut in a grand revival of the heart-throbbing melodrama of the eighties, *East Lynne*, at Morgan Hall. The play was given under the auspices of the Key Club. Miss Helen Osband of the Speech Department directed the faculty cast, while Mrs. Jack Montgomery was in charge of the costume committee.

Early in November, the Blackfriars produced the popular comedy-drama, *The Night of January 16*, by Ayn Rand, which appeared on Broadway last season, and which has been touring the country this year. This play was also under the direction of Dr. Lester Raines.

Squaring the Circle, a farce-comedy of the Soviet theatre was staged as the fourth major play of the year on January 8.

Other plays which will be produced this

season under the auspices of The Blackfriars include the presentation of a major play on February 11, the staging of the dramatic hit, *The First Lady*, on March 10 or 11, and the production of Shakespeare's tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, in April. Dr. Lester Raines will be in charge.

University of Missouri

The season for the Missouri Workshop, dramatic organization of the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., opened with the first non-professional production of Irwin Shaw's play, *Bury the Dead*, directed by Herbert V. Hake, formerly of Port Arthur (Texas) Senior High School and now guest director at the University of Missouri. *Bury the Dead* was a sensational Broadway hit last spring—a strong propaganda play against War.

On December 1, 2 and 3, the Missouri Workshop presented its first "world premiere" of a new play by Charles Quimby Burdette. The play, entitled *Wings of the Morning*, is intensely interesting because of its commentary upon the restless social order of today.

Noah, by Andre Obey, noted French author, which was recently produced in New York, with Pierre Fresnay in the title role, will be given on February 9, 10 and 11. *Noah* is a naive story of the Flood, one in the colloquial style of *The Green Pastures*, and is full of anachronisms, as well as being intimate, rational and pointed with symbolic overtones.

Climaxing the season, George Bernard Shaw's play, *Candida*, will be produced on March 23, 24 and 25. The reader will recall that Katharine Cornell made her first great success in this piece and has revived it many times for the road. The play will be done in the style and decor of the "nineties".

The Bradley One-Act Play Contest, on May 12 and 13, will close the Workshop's season. In this contest, original one-act plays written at the University of Missouri are tested, placed in competition, and a prize of fifty dollars is awarded to the best.

One-act plays, all of them original, are given at each of the bi-weekly meetings of the Workshop. The University is annually the host to the State High School Dramatics Contest, which this year occurs on April 30 and May 1, and is a regular participant in the annual drama festival which is open to Missouri Colleges.

—Justin Hammond.

Ohio University

The Petrified Forest, by Sherwood, opened the present dramatic season under the leadership of Dr. Robert Gates Dawes at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, on October 29 and 30. This was followed with a highly successful presentation of the Soviet comedy, *Squaring the Circle*, by Kataev, on December 11 and 12. Other major productions for the year are *Kind Lady*, scheduled for March 12 and 13; an original musical titled *How's Your Greek?* for April 16 and 17; and the closing production of the season, *The Whole Town's Talking*, to be given on May 1.

The first annual one-act play contest for the high schools of southeastern Ohio will be held on Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20, at Ohio University. The contest, which is sponsored by The National Thespian Society, will be under the immediate management of Dr. Dawes.

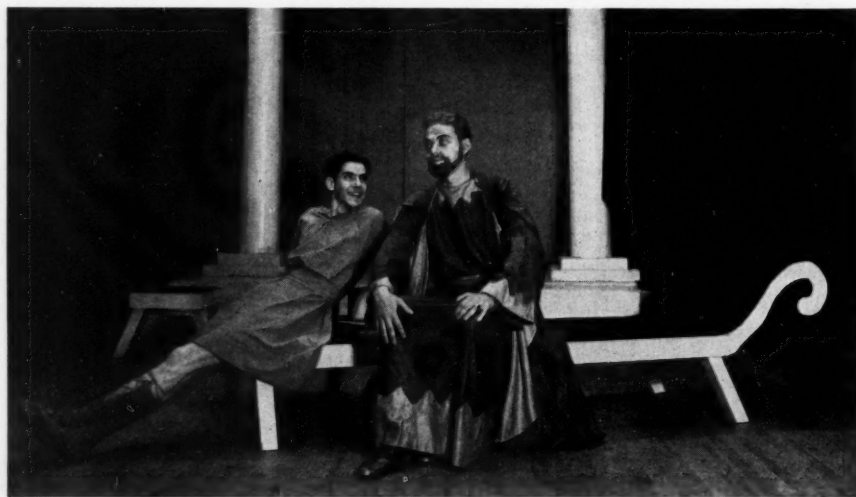
Hendrix College

Three major plays are scheduled for production this season at Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas, under the direction of Prof. Robert B. Capel. These are *The Patsy*, *Everyman*, and *Tiger House*. Several one-act plays are also included in the dramatic program for the year.

University of Idaho (Southern Branch)

The dramatic season for the University of Idaho (Southern Branch), Pocatello, Idaho, opened early in November with the presentation of *Post Road*, directed by Dr. Vio Mae Powell. A Christmas Nativity Play was staged on December 13. *The Yellow Jacket* has also been scheduled for production this year, but no definite date had been set for it at the time of this writing.

Productions for last season included *The Romantic Young Lady*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, and the miracle play by Thomas Wood Stevens, *The Nursery Maid of Heaven*. These plays were all under the direction of Miss Nelly Mendham.



"Paris" and "Menelaus" in *HELENA'S HUSBAND*, staged at San Bernardino (California) Junior College. Dr. Tempe Allison, director.

Whitewater State Teachers College

Five major plays constitute the greater part of the dramatic program this season at Whitewater (Wis.) State Teachers College. The season opened with a production of the play, *The Bishop Misbehaves*, under the direction of Miss Florence E. Holcombe, who directs all dramatics at this college. This was followed with a production of Pollock's *The Fool*, and later, with a Christmas Mask, *On the Hills of Bethlehem*. The program also includes a production of *King Lear* in modern dress, and the presentation of *The Silver Cord*.

Under the supervision of Miss Holcombe, a very active program in dramatics is sponsored during the year at this college. Students present several one-act plays at their meetings, and the writing of original one-acts is encouraged. Students also present several radio plays and skits, and participate in the Drama Festival each year sponsored by the Wisconsin Drama League. Several courses, including Modern Plays, Dramatic Production, and Creative Dramatics, are offered as a part of the curriculum. "The Thespian" is the major school dramatic club, having at present a membership of over sixty students.

* * *

Acadia University

Program of three one-act plays presented in November, opened the season at Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada, under the direction of Prof. H. F. Sipprell. Three other major productions, one of which was given in December and the other two to be staged in March and May respectively, make up the dramatic schedule for the present year. The closing play will be a Shakespearean, possibly *Hamlet*.

Several one-act plays are also produced during the year in order to provide parts for those who are unable to get roles in the major productions. Scenes from the major plays are often broadcast from the local radio station. In addition, entire plays, usually Shakespearean, are sometimes enacted over the air.

* * *

Central Baptist Junior College

Vollmer's play, *Sun-Up*, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, and Kennedy's *The Servant in the House* are the three major plays scheduled for production this year at the Central Baptist Junior College of Conway, Arkansas. The program also includes the following one-act plays: *The Finger of God*, *The Maker of Dreams*, *Between the Soup and the Savory*, and *Indian Summer*. Miss Maggie Mae



Scene from Shakespeare's *THE WINTER'S TALE*, staged at Huntington College, Montgomery, Ala.

Binion has charge of dramatics at this school.

Plans for this season also include the presentation of several one-act plays over the station at Little Rock, the production of a spring Commencement Pageant, and participation in the District Play Contest. "The Maskers" and "The Little Theatre" are the major dramatic organizations on the Campus.

* * *

Mount St. Clare College

Under the direction of Sister Mary Edward Smith, five major plays have been scheduled for production this year

at Mount St. Clare College, Clinton, Iowa. These are: *The Little Town of Bethlehem*, *After Wimpole Street*, *The Rosary*, *Quality Street*, and *High Priced Happiness*. Among the one-act plays to be staged are *The Dust of the Road*, *Queen Victoria Pops the Question*, and scenes from Shakespeare, Sheridan and others.

Courses are offered in Acting, Play Production, and Interpretative Reading at this college. Students are also permitted to do radio work through the courtesy of the School of Speech at the State University. This school is also a member of the Iowa Junior College Forensic League.

* * *

Edinboro State Teachers College

The Late Christopher Bean and the one-acts, *Spirals*, *Relax*, *Josephine*, and *Sod*, are among the plays staged this year at State Teachers College, Edinboro, Penna., under the direction of Miss Jane S. Ludgate. The dramatic program for the season also includes a tournament of six plays to be directed by students, and for which awards are given for best scenery, best acting, and best directing.

* * *

Ashland College

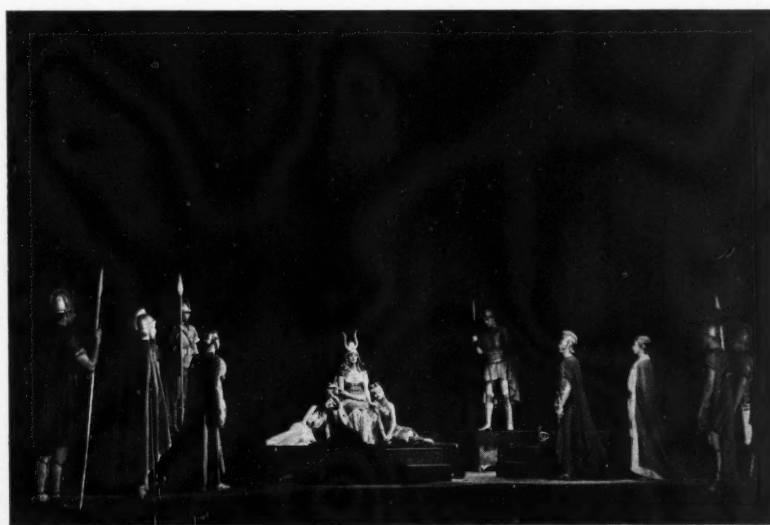
The Romantic Young Lady, by Sierra, *The Princess and Mr. Parker*, by Seiler, *The Comedy of Errors*, by Shakespeare, *The Trojan Women*, by Euripides, and possibly *The Double Door*, by McFadden, constitute the major productions scheduled for this year at Ashland (Ohio) College, under the direction of Miss Thelma Slack. Several one-act plays, among them *The Gift*, *The Governor's Shoes*, and *In a French Laundry*, are also scheduled for production this season.

Other dramatic activities for the year at this college include the presentation of a radio program, a one-act play tournament for the high schools in Ashland County, and the presentation of plays in neighboring communities.

* * *

Lindenwood College

Mrs. Moonlight, *Drama at Inish*, and two other major plays to be chosen later, are scheduled for production this year at Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Mo., under the direction of Miss Mary McKenzie Gordon. Among the one-acts scheduled for production are: *Let It Burn*, *Love In a French Kitchen*, *Marriage of Pierrot*, and *Lights and Shadow*. Plans for operettas, pageants, radio programs, etc., will be completed this coming semester.



Pasadena (Calif.) Community Playhouse Drama Festival Production of *ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA*.

ON THE HIGH SCHOOL STAGE

Variety Comprises Theatrical Fare for Thespians at Morgantown (W. Va.) High School During Past Season

Assuming that variety is the spice of theatrical fare, Morgantown High School Thespians opened their 1935-36 season with George M. Cohan's ever popular mystery, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, which was presented November 22, 1935, before a capacity house. The cast of fourteen characters headed by Raymond Sargent, as the novelist, William Hollowell Magee, kept up the tempo, and the howling wind realistically produced by playing a R. C. A. Victor record off stage intrigued the audience and heightened the suspense.

Saturday, November 2, 1935, Clyde Harner, William Bierer, Raymond Sargent, Donald Shriver, and Miss Dorothy Stone White, Thespian sponsor, attended the Drama Institute held at Mount Mercy College for Women, under the auspices of the Pittsburgh Drama League. The outstanding features of the program were the lecture on "Stage Lighting" by Francis M. Falge, the brief but charming talk by Miss Ruth St. Denis, and the production of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* by the Drama School of the Carnegie Institute of Technology under the direction of Mr. B. Iden Payne.

On Friday evening, January 17, 1936, the Mid-Year Seniors sponsored a program of three one-act plays. The Thespians had charge of the technical work in addition to presenting Paul Green's North Carolina folk tragedy, *The Last of the Lowries* which so impressed the audience that the director decided right then and there to enter it in the West Virginia One-Act Play Contest.

Perhaps the most effective piece of scenery constructed and painted by the Thespians was the Emperor's house for the operetta, *The Dragon of Wo Foo* presented by the Music Department. Hot debate ensued, although the thermometer had dropped to below zero, over whether we should have a purple dragon with yellow and green spots, or a green dragon flecked with yellow and purple. The advocates of the purple monster finally bowed their heads in defeat before a blue-green creation with golden eyes which stuck out a derisive vermilion tongue at the enemy.

The box office success of the year was Alice Gerstenberg's clever satire on playwrights and actors called *The Pot Boiler*. Presented at 11 o'clock in the morning in the gymnasium with an admission charge of only five cents, students blithely forsook Cicero and geometry, Milton and the reeking test tube, to flock to the play. Robert Mathews emerged from behind the scenes, paint brush in hand, to essay the role of Thomas Pinikles Sud, the playwright, scoring such a triumph that he forthwith had to find a new scenic artist. *The Pot Boiler* netted forty dollars, enough to finance entering the State One-Act Play Contest at Charleston to which we eagerly looked forward.

For the spring offering the Thespians chose *I'll Leave It To You*, by Noel Coward. Although not quite so riotous as the author's more popular *Hay Fever*, the play has the same clever plot, brilliant dialogue and Mad Hatter Characters. Jane Price, who for two successive years had won the County Poetry Reading Contest, had the leading role and proved herself a capable actress in the scene in the third act in which she tells her family just what she thinks of them, thereby building up a

thrilling climax. Clark Hopkins, as Bobbie, and Robert Mathews, as Uncle Daniel, won praise for their convincing performances.

As part of the preparation for the second semester initiation, someone struck upon the idea of having each candidate write a paper setting forth his reasons for desiring to join such a worthy organization as the National Thespians. Daniel Draper's opus written in the manner of Samuel Pepys' famous "Diary" delighted everyone with its charming humor. Hereafter the writing of such essays will be a regular part of the initiation program. The names of eleven worthy Thespians were added to the roster, March 23, 1936.

Highlights which should be mentioned in passing were the very engaging talk by Professor Stephen F. Crocker of the English Department of West Virginia University on "Personal Glimpses of Theatrical Folk," in which he mentioned Eugene O'Neill, Charles Laughlin and George M. Cohan, to name but a few; and the very delightful dancing party with which Miss Betty Jane Shuman entertained her fellow actors and actresses on the evening of May 30.

The most dramatic moment of the year is always the meeting at which the officers for the coming year are announced. With the election of Clyde Harner, president; Jack Shephard, vice president; Jean Louise Callahan, secretary, and Helen Louise Dent, treasurer, all sails were set for this year's voyage on the high seas of dramatic activity, a voyage which has already proved to be an eventful and enjoyable one in many, many ways, and which will be the subject of another report later in the year.—Dorothy Stone White, director of dramatics.

Troupe 256 of Twin Falls, Idaho, Accepts New Members

At an effective initiation ceremony, December fourth, at the home of Ida Lee Lamb, Thespian President, fifteen pledges were accepted into membership in Troupe 256 of The National Thespians, at Twin Falls (Idaho) High School. In charge of the services were: Miss Florence Rees, dramatic instructor and club sponsor, Miss Lamb and Herbert Larson, vice president.

The new members individually enacted bits from acceptable poems and plays, showing throughout a decided preference for Shakespeare. Two pantomimes were also presented by the pledging group after only five minutes notice.

BEST THESPIANS



Honor Roll



Thespians whose names are listed below have been awarded special recognition for their superior work, loyalty, promptness, and cooperation in the interest of high school dramatics. They have been selected as the most valuable Thespians of their troupes for the past school year.

Miss Jewell McCormick, Troupe No. 323, Daviess High School, Owensboro, Ky.
Mr. Marvin Moon, Troupe No. 318, Dodge City (Kans.) Senior High School.
Miss Thelma McGhee, Troupe No. 283, Knoxville (Tenn.) High School.

The Thespian Oath was repeated by: Nellie McBride, Shirley Smith, Jeanne Robinson, Altha Wells, Marjorie Johnston, Edward Bertie, Mildred Bragg, Josephine Birch, Dick Reynolds, Neal Gipson, Eleanor Hollingsworth, Nathan Tolbert, Grant Sawyer, Dorris Layton, and Mary Buckmaster. Candlelight illuminated the Thespian shield used as a background for the ceremony. Refreshments were served by the President at the close of the evening.

The all-school play, *The Road to Yesterday*, was given before an appreciative audience on November 12 and 13. The casts were greeted with frequent rounds of applause for their interpretation of the moments of sophisticated humor and boisterous comedy, and their complete attention during the tense dramatic and even tragic points of the plot. A different cast, composed of well-directed students, was used for each performance. Miss Florence Rees was capably assisted by several students in producing this play.

Thespian from Grove High School, Paris, Tenn., Achieves Fame as Member of Old Globe Company

Members and friends of Troupe No. 198 of Grove High School, Paris, Tennessee, have many reasons to be proud of the success which has come to one of their fellow Thespians, Miss Elizabeth Robinson. According to newspaper reports from Cleveland, Ohio, Miss Robinson played a conspicuous part in the performances, this past summer, of the Old Globe Company at the Great Lakes Exposition. One write-up quoted Thomas Wood Stevens, director of the famed Old Globe Company, as calling her his "latest find."

Recently, Miss Robinson was chosen to play the part of Juliet in the Globe Theatre production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Lately she played in Dallas, at the Texas Centennial, and went on tour with the Company on the first of the year.

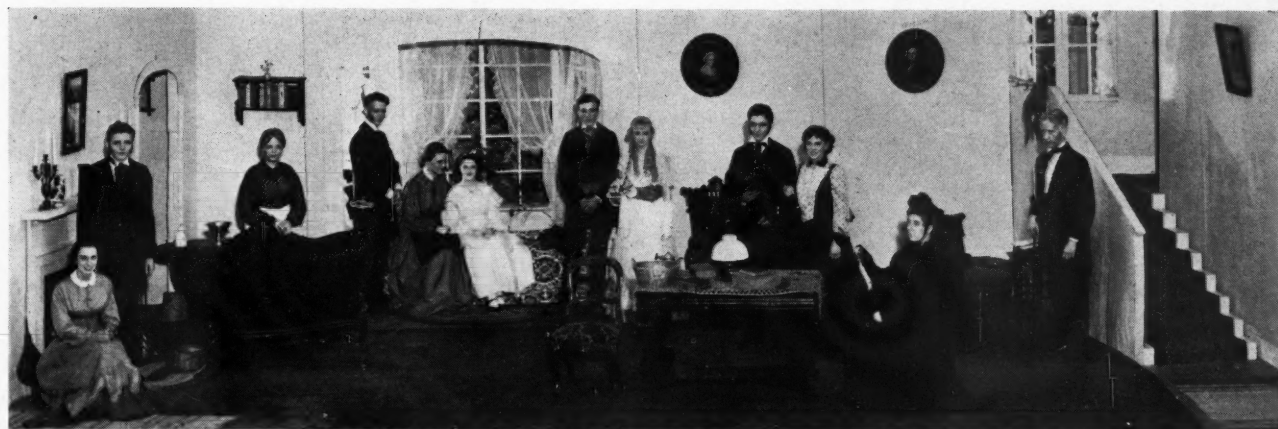
Another honor which has come to Troupe No. 198 is the awarding of a full time scholarship at the Chicago School of Expression, to Mr. R. Gee Burch, who served as troupe president during his senior year and was chosen as Best Thespian for two consecutive years. Mr. Burch attended the University of Chicago last year and appeared on a number of radio programs.

The present school year began with thirteen new members. Thirteen may be an unlucky number for some people, but for Troupe No. 198 any number is lucky as long as talent accompanies the number. At the initiation, a pantomime was given with five minutes preparation. According to the reports of some older members, it was the best pantomime given in the history of the troupe.

Two one-act plays have been given so far this year: one before the student body and one before the Parent-Teacher Association. Plans for this year include an intensive study of make-up and stage technique, as well as the staging of several plays. A happy reunion of the Troupe, with graduate Thespians as guests, was held at a special dinner party during the Christmas vacation. Another Thespian initiation is planned for an early date.—Willa Hamilton, Secretary.

Children of the Moon Staged by Dodge City (Kans.) Thespians

The major and most successful production of Troupe No. 318 at the Dodge City Senior High School during the season 1935-36 was Martin Flavin's *Children of the Moon* with an all-National Thespian cast. This was presented on the evening of April 28th to a very appreciative and large audience. Grace Wilcox and Marvin Moon produced outstanding portrayals of Jane and Judge Atherton. The all-senior play cast had eight members: Grace Wilcox, Luella Williamson, Emely Nelson,



Cast and stage set for the production of *LITTLE WOMEN* at Union High School, Willoughby, Ohio.
Directed by Miss Cleo Sawyer.

Harold Crispell, Gordon Busley, Thad Barhydt, and James Newton Hamilton.

Although the season marked the beginning of National Thespian participation, the director, Miss Maxine Nevins, and all Thespians made it a successful one. The newly-founded troupe began with Frank Shay's adaption of Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, presented by a cast of 28 on December 10th and 18th. Marvin Moon, president, gave an excellent characterization of old Ebenezer Scrooge.

And *It Rained*, the school's operetta, had a Thespian, Emely Nelson, in it who starred as a French show girl. Other Thespians had major roles.

On January 28th, the Hi-Y and G. R. Clubs presented *Huckleberry Finn*, an adaption by Roy Lewis. The period costumes and many laugh lines made for experiences to the several Thespians in this delightful comedy. Grace Wilcox, Vivian McNair, and Marvin Moon all starred in the characterizations of Ruth Watson, Aunt Polly, and John Finn.

The Junior play, *Oh, Professor*, by Katherine Kavanaugh, presented on February 14th, had a starring character in Joe Dougherty, Jr., playing the part of Professor Percival Courtwright.

The high school entered *The Great Choice* as their contest number in the Fine Arts Contest for the section and received a Superior rating. Grace Wilcox, Bob Olson, and Marvin Moon were outstanding in this one-act.

An impressive installation was held on May 15th at the Lora Locke Hotel and 12 members were initiated for the coming year. Three neophytes gave *Sky Fodder* and others presented parts of plays as part of the initiatory service. Miss Maxine Nevins presided at the service. Those initiated were: Vivian McNair, Harry Waite, Selden Jones, Glenna Bradshaw, Virginia Furnish, Yvonne England, Rachael Anderson, Richard Rupp, Joe Dougherty, Jr., Virgil Grotzky, Robert Borthick, and Bob Olson. This nucleus for the 1936-37 season broadcasted radio skits and one-act plays over Station KGNO during the summer months.

Thirteenth Annual Play Festival Staged at Pontiac (Mich.) Senior High School

The first performance of the thirteenth annual one-act play festival, staged under the direction of Mr. W. N. Viola at Pontiac, Michigan, Senior High School, on December 9, 10, 11, met with the customary success which has favored similar performances given by this school in other years. Four plays were staged on Wednesday, December 9. These were: *Singapore Spider*, a mystery; *Paradise*, a comedy; *Brothers*, a drama, and *Miss Nancy's Legacy*, a modern comedy.

An appreciative audience received the second group of four plays present on Thursday, December 10. The program included *An Unprepared Test*, *Sardines*, *Ultra*, a modern travesty by Mr. Viola, and *Hyacinths for Christmas*.

The program for the third day of the festival consisted of the four best plays staged during the previous two days. Plays chosen for the final performance on December 11 were *Singapore Spider*, *Brothers*, *Ultra*, and *Hyacinths for Christmas*. The judges were Miss Maude Van Arsdale, Virginia McDermet and J. C. Covert. Under the leadership of Mr. Viola, the play festival has become an annual and important event at this high school and for the citizens of Pontiac, Michigan. Mr. Viola is the author of "One-Act Festival Plays" and "Creative Dramatics for Secondary Education."

Little Women Major Production of Last Season at Willoughby (Ohio) High School

Little Women, the Senior Class Play, was the year's outstanding dramatic production at Union High School, Willoughby, Ohio. The play was said to have been one of the most finished, artistic productions ever to have been presented in the high school. The acting was splendidly done. The vivacious "Jo" was exceptionally well characterized by Alice Reeve, Elizabeth Perry and Gerry Burke as "Meg" and "Amy," Helen Rolph as "Aunt March" and Robert Zickerman as "John Brooke" were the four Thespians who gave fine interpretations; Sam Southall, as "Laurie" won the audience, as did the other characters in the play as presented by Greta Shipman, Catherine Ferguson, Phyllis Pressley, Gene Benson, Leigh Miller, and Charles Delsantro, who made a delightful near-sighted Professor Baehr.

Especial care was taken to give the play as much period as possible. The difficulty of finding costumes and furniture of the 1863-69 period was repaid, however, when the curtain went up on the first scene of the play. The townspeople who had furnished many of the costumes and most of the furniture and properties took a personal interest in the success of the play.

A number of one-act plays were produced during the school year. The five performances of *Pink and Patches* attested to its reception. One performance was given at Kent, Ohio, in the one act play contest sponsored by the National Thespians. Gerry Burke as "Texie" was one of the sectional cast of six, chosen from all the plays presented; she received a Thespian medal for her excellence. Other successful one-act plays presented were: *Ladies in Linen* and *The Florist Shop*.

Dramatics work at Willoughby is under the direction of Miss Cleo Sawyer, who is also sponsor for Thespian Troupe 220.

New York Comedy Success Staged by Thespians at Western Hills High School, Cincinnati, Ohio

Aurania Rouverol's comedy of youth, *Growing Pains*, a New York stage hit which has been even a greater success with hundreds of high schools and colleges during the past few years, was presented to a capacity audience, on Friday, December 4, by a well chosen group of aspirants for Troupe No. 286 of Western Hills High School, Cincinnati, Ohio. Under the direction of Mrs. Vesta H. Watson, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor, the stage was effectively set for a finished performance which met with instant approval from the audience. Of particular interest was the dance scene which was handled with true artistic skill.

Highly commendable performances were given by several members of the cast. The role of Prof. McIntyre was played with skill by Dan Young, while Doris Dunkel was very effective in the part of Mrs. McIntyre. Erna Mae Grothaus and Lawrence Bradford, as Terry and George respectively, did exceptionally good work. Others in the well chosen cast included Walton Ector, Delbert Brinker, Bill Heubach, James Harris, Dorothy Wyenandt, Agnes Krebs, June Bruckman, Marie Matacia, Jean Ritter, and Adele Hopper.

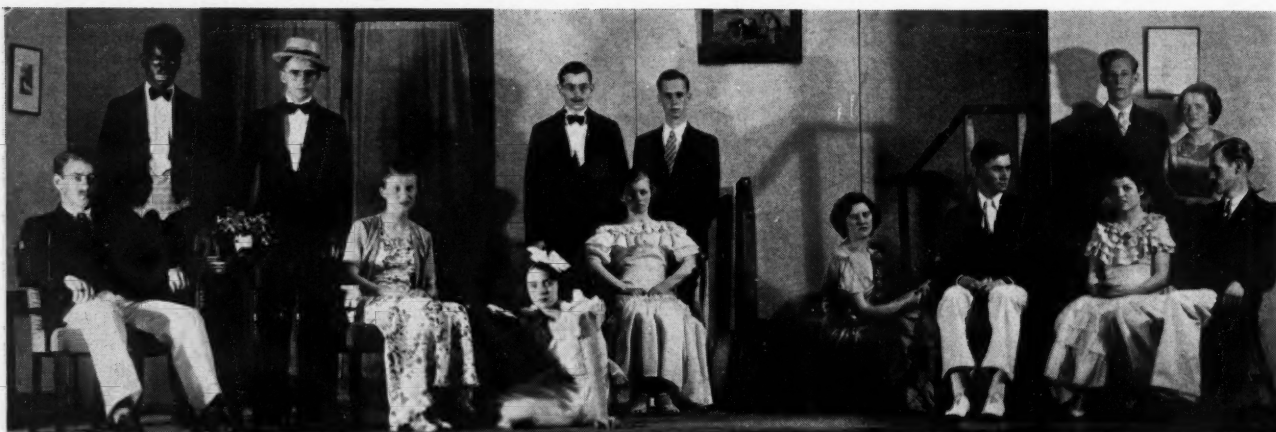
Mrs. Watson was recently honored with election to membership in Alpha Psi Omega Honorary Dramatic Fraternity.

Pekin (Ill.) Thespians Enjoy Outstanding Dramatic Season During Past Season

In previous years, the custom at Pekin High School, Pekin, Illinois, has always been for the junior class to give a comedy in the fall, to be followed the next spring by a serious senior play. Last year's proceedings, however, were reversed when *The Goose Hangs High*, a Christmas play, was presented as the Junior Class production, December 13, and a three-act comedy, *Honor Bright*, was given by the graduating class, May 21. Both plays were entirely successful.

Because of the large casts in both these plays, and also in *Brewster's Millions*, which was presented earlier in the fall as the all-school play, the active membership of Troupe 145 increased a full score.

Three Thespians brought great honor to Pekin High School by winning the Illinois Wesleyan Play Contest first place banner. They were Nina Manker, Sarah Ann Smith and Bob Maus, who by their acting in the play *Mansions* brought Pekin first place in this tournament for the second time during the three years they have entered. In 1933 in this contest Pekin High School won first place with *Minuet* and in 1935 second place with the play *Highness*.



Cast for Booth Tarkington's *SEVENTEEN* as staged at Newport (Vermont) High School, under the direction of Miss Kate E. Ferrin. A production of Troupe No. 107.

Other one-act plays presented during the 1935-36 school year were *His First Dress Suit*, *The Valiant* and *Fiat Lux*. In November a group of Thespians gave a cutting from *King John* before the state high school conference at Urbana, Illinois. In May, too, for the second year Pekin High School was host to the Big Twelve High School organization and sponsored the second annual Big Twelve Drama Festival.

Much play reading for pleasure was done during the club's weekly activity period. One of the year's accomplishments was the purchase of a new, green rug to cover the stage floor. The first group to enjoy this purchase was the cast of *The First Dress Suit* at the time of the Big Twelve Drama Festival in May.

Improved sets and stage effects for all presentations of the year were the results of the activity of the Stage Guild, a very active organization at Pekin High School under the direction of Mr. W. Kirtley Atkinson.

In the commencement pageant given June 4, the three speaking parts were taken by Thespians. This pageant, *A Rendezvous With Life*, was written and directed by Miss E. Louise Falkin, Troupe sponsor and director of dramatics.

On June third, as a grand finale for the year's activities, Troupe 146 held a picnic at Mineral Springs Park in Pekin. At this time, too, an initiation ceremony was held and seven students became members of Pekin High's troupe. The picnic was also something of a farewell for Miss Louise Falkin, director of the Troupe for the past five years. Miss Falkin resigned her position to be married on July seventh and take a leading role herself in a drama for two. Miss Falkin was presented with a beautiful vase as a token of the troupe's appreciation for her work. Her position this year is capably filled by Mr. W. Kirtley Atkinson who taught English and assisted with speech activities and directed the Stage Guild which took complete charge of the staging of all the plays presented last year.

Plans are being made for the organization of an Alumni Troupe. Nineteen of last year's twenty-seven members graduated but the other eight form the nucleus of an active troupe this fall. Officers for this season are: President, James Lane; Secretary, Mary Margaret Richards, and Treasurer, Bruce Bramlage.

—RUTH BRUECHNER, Sec., 1935-36.

Radio Plays New Activities for Students at Little Falls (N. Y.) High School

The newest type of work entered into this season under the supervision of Mr. Russell B. Archer, director of dramatics and speech activities at Little Falls (N. Y.) Junior-Senior High School, is the presentation of a series of radio plays over station WIBX in Utica, New York. Students will be given an excellent

opportunity to learn something of the technique of radio broadcasting.

Last year was the ninth season in which this school has produced one-act plays with Iliion and Herkimer High Schools, playing in each of the three towns. Last year's play was *His First Shave*. Other presentations of the year included the public performance of the verse-speaking choir arrangement of *Hiawatha*, a program of four one-act plays consisting of *The Command Performance*, *Allison's Lad*, *Three Taps on a Wall* and *Love in Bloom*. *Love in Bloom* was also presented for the patients of Pine Crest and also at the Methodist Church. Two other one-acts were also presented at Pine Crest.

The largest production of the year was *Growing Pains*, which brought a capacity house for both the afternoon and evening performances and which was repeated a week later for

the Red Cross Flood Relief. The Dramatic Club, in conjunction with the dramatic class, also presented eight plays and programs for the assembly period.

Thespian Troupe Organized by Students at Wetumpka (Ala.) High School

Under the supervision of Miss Margaret Hogan, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor, ten students formed the newly organized troupe of the National Thespians at Wetumpka (Ala.) High School. The formal troupe organization was held on November 1, at the high school. The following students comprised the charter roll: Wilfred Strickland, Joe Benefield, Ruth Burke, Christian Wingard, Jr., Muriel McGriff, Edward Moody, Elinor McJunkin, Clara Lawson Sanford, Jane Culverhouse, and Harry Pennington.

At a second meeting of the troupe, several speeches and readings were given by members. The program was climaxed with a talk outlining the work of the coming year, given by Miss Hogan, the sponsor.—Clara L. Sandford, Secretary.

Card System Established for Prospective Thespians at Mineola (N. Y.) High School

The great increase of student interest in dramatics at Mineola (N. Y.) High School, through the activities of Thespian Troupe No. 276, made it advisable to establish an application card system for prospective Thespians this past year. Miss Jane Austen, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor, is responsible for this new interest in dramatics.

An exceptionally busy season opened with the annual school play, *A Pair of Sixes*, in which outstanding work was done by a number of Thespians. The regular Thespian installation was held in February, and a second installation in early spring. The next phase of the dramatic season was the presentation of the regular matinee. A program of two one-act plays, *Apostrophe in Modern Dress*, and *Two Pairs of Spectacles*, was successfully presented by Thespian and prospective Thespians. The usual plan of introducing specialties between plays was followed.

The First Annual One-Act Play Contest for the High Schools of Southeastern Ohio will be held at Ohio University, Athens, on Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20. Dr. Robert Gates Dawes, head of the Department of Dramatics at Ohio University will have immediate charge of the contest. This is one of several regional contests sponsored in Ohio by THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY. Full particulars may be obtained from the National Office, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Shadows of the Superstitions

A Drama in One Act
by BARBARA DITTMANN
Senior, Tucson (Arizona) High School

Scores of legends, the most exciting of which are the tales of a rich mine of gold found by an old Dutchman, Jacob Walz, are associated with Superstition Mountain, located about twenty-five miles east of Phoenix, Arizona.

Since the days of Jacob Walz, hundreds have died in the attempt to find the gold mine, the location of which was lost with his death. A superstition exists that he who searches in the Superstitions for gold, will die. Facts tend to prove the truth of this belief.

Miss Dittmann, a senior (age 17) at Tucson High School, has used this legend as a basis for her play, *Shadows of the Superstitions*, which was awarded first place last year in the Arizona High School Playwriting Contest sponsored by the State Teacher's College, at Tempe, Arizona.—Editor.

Characters:

Santiago, an Indian.

Vedder, an American of Dutch descent.

Gardener, a young American.

SCENE: It is just after dusk in a lonely mountain pass. The shadows are deep and long, and, since there is no moon, the sky is dark and forboding. Packs, pickaxes, and other camping equipment, including several water containers, are piled at the right upstage. At the left an Indian is squatting before a small fire, stirring something in a pan. He is mumbling to himself.

Santiago. (Looking about uneasily.) How silent it is here! These Superstition Mountains have no noble thunderbird to carry their dead to the land of shadows . . . only buzzards to devour their souls . . . only buzzards. No one can escape that evil spell. (Mumbles unintelligibly to himself for a few seconds, continuing to stir the cooking food. Then, apparently hearing approaching footsteps, looks up.) Here comes Vedder and his poor young friend. (Voices are heard offstage at right. Two men enter. The elder of them, Vedder, is a strongly-built, middle-aged man with an authoritative manner. Gardener, the younger, is about twenty with a modest, quiet bearing. Both are dressed in rough clothes. Vedder carries a gun.)

Gardener. The horses are very worn. One of them is even a little lame.

Vedder. Confound the beasts! You feed and water them and they show their gratitude by lameness when you need them most. Santiago! (Looks around for him.) Where is that Indian? (Santiago rises and approaches the two men. Gardener remains at right while Vedder goes to meet the Indian.)

Santiago. Did you call me, sir?

Vedder. You heard me. Why didn't you take better care of those horses? Speak up! Why don't you answer me?

Santiago. (Rather resentfully.) The way was rough, sir, and the stones were sharp. Perhaps if we didn't go so fast. . .

Vedder. Excuses, nothing but excuses. How dare you speak to me like that?

Gardener. Please, Vedder, you are tired after your long journey. The sun was terribly hot, and, as Santiago says, the way was rough. Come, twelve hours in the saddle through such desolate country is apt to wear one's nerves to an edge. A little rest will make you feel much better. (Santiago returns to his cooking.)

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Vedder. You're right, Gardener. I suppose my nerves are jumpy.

Gardener. We are all in the same condition, I know. Perhaps we won't have so far to go tomorrow.

Vedder. (Turning angry again.) So that's it, is it? You can't stand the pace, so you want me to go more slowly. I didn't realize I was dragging such a tenderfoot into this trip. Well, I won't humor you. We will go on tomorrow . . . just as far . . . maybe even farther than today.

Gardener. But, Vedder, think of the horses. What can we do without them? One more day like this would ruin them. You know they are nearly exhausted now.

Vedder. Never fear, my fine lad, I can attend to those matters. You may see to the milk supply as more fitting to your age and sentiments. Soon you'll be expecting me to believe those silly legends about the Superstition Mountains.

Gardener. What? Is there really a legend about these mountains? Please tell me about it, Vedder.

Vedder. You insult my intelligence. Go to Santiago if you must hear those fairy tales. I can't be bothered. (Turns away toward the packs, but turns back quickly.) Say Gardener, you don't think I could believe in such stuff, do you?

Gardener. Oh, no, of course not. (Pauses for a moment before going on.) By the way, Vedder, just what is our location now?

Vedder. I'm not quite sure; I've never been in these mountains before. Santiago, do you know where we are?

Santiago. (Looking up towards the sky a moment.) By the appearance of the heavens I should say we are somewhere near Needle's Point, which we saw when we came in, but I cannot be sure.

Gardener. Then how did we get here? You seemed to know the exact turns to take.

Vedder. Don't ask impertinent questions. That was part of your bargain, you know. (Turning to Santiago.) Santiago, bring our dinner immediately.

Santiago. Yes, sir. I'm fixing it as quickly as I can. (Retires to the fire and prepares plates for the two men.)

Vedder. (Aside to Gardener.) I don't like the way that Indian answers me. He grows less agreeable every day. I shouldn't be surprised if we had trouble with him on this trip.

Gardener. Oh, I don't know, Vedder. He seemed rather the contrary to me. I've always read that Indians are rather reserved anyway. Santiago is quite trustworthy, I think.

Vedder. Indians in books and Indians in real life aren't the same, you'll find. I never did like books anyway. They give you youngsters queer ideas. (Santiago approaches with the plates.)

Gardener. Thank you, Santiago.

Vedder. (After one or two bites.) What is this? Do you expect me to swallow this vile mess? Prepare me something else immediately, you stupid fool. Don't stand there looking at me. Do something!

Santiago. (Sullenly.) There isn't much food left. If we are careful, maybe enough for two—three days. Otherwise only a few meals.

Vedder. What did you say? Do you mean to tell me that the food supply is short? You eat too much, you red demon. How could you stuff yourself when you knew there wasn't much left? I should have known better than to trust you with the supplies.

Gardener. It might be best under the circumstances to save as much as possible, Vedder.

A SAMPLE—

KATE. Thirt—Twenty years ago. I can't remember that far back, Willie.

WILLIE. Only yesterday, Kate. You promised to be true to me forever—one afternoon at the old turnstile. You were sweet sixteen—but no sweeter than you are now, Kate. We'd been for a walk. I remember it so well.

KATE. (Beginning to enjoy herself.) I haven't the slightest recollection of it.

WILLIE. I'll forget that you didn't remember—to be true to me, I mean—

KATE. Why, Willie, you sound exactly like a theme song.

WILLIE.—if you'll only make me happy now. (He rises hastily as shouts are heard from the back hall.) What under heaven?

KATE. Oh! It's J. R. Talking to the Bishop. Go on, Willie.

WILLIE. You must be mistaken. You can't talk to a Bishop like that.

KATE. (Impatiently.) Oh, the Bishop can't hear it thunder. He's stone deaf.

WILLIE. I don't wonder, if people talk to him like that.

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This isn't so bad anyway. You're tired, man, and hungry. A little food will change your whole outlook on the subject. (*Santiago moves back to a squatting position at the left and rear of the fire and gazes moodily into it.*) Come, Vedder, make yourself comfortable. (*Vedder seats himself near the right of the fire, and Gardner stands at the right a little forward.*) I'm sure you must have had some very interesting life. Tell me something about it.

Vedder. (*Very pleasantly.*) You're right, lad; I've had some exciting experiences in my day. Traveling over the entire globe is likely to give you something to tell about, especially when you do it like I have. That's the life, my boy, shifting here and there with only your sword and a stout heart to keep you alive. Yes, many's the time I've killed fifty or more men in one day.

Gardener. Really?

Vedder. Certainly. Now we have guns, of course, and you can kill twice as many with a few bullets than in a whole night of blade hacking, but there's not the same spirit. No, give me a stout steel saber any time.

Gardener. Oh, tell me some more! (*Gardener throws himself comfortably on the ground to listen as Vedder puts his plate aside and rises to a more impressive position.*)

Vedder. Well, one time I was in Africa looking for diamond mines in the jungles with my pal, Jacob Walz. The dense undergrowth presses around you until you can't see your enemy even when he's close to you, puncturing your skin with his poisoned darts.

Gardener. I've read all about those African savages. Cannibals, aren't they? They say they're really treacherous.

Vedder. Treacherous is right, Gardener. Why your American Indians don't come into pistol range when it comes to African treachery. (*Santiago snorts in disgust and shrugs his shoulders.*) Those savages will smile at you like your best friends in the daytime and then at night will come sneaking around after your jugular vein.

Gardener. Did you have any trouble with them?

Vedder. That part of the story comes later. The directions to the mine didn't seem to be leading us anywhere, and after wandering aimlessly for weeks thousands of savages suddenly swept down upon us. We were completely surrounded, and as they poured toward me, I dragged out my sword and slashed at them until I was knee-deep in blood. (*Vedder gestures wildly as he becomes more excited.*) The groans of the dying natives nearly drowned Jake's cry for aid as one of those black dogs leaped upon him. With one mighty arc I crushed his skull with my smoking blade.

Gardener. Did you find the mine after that?

Vedder. We didn't stay long. Those savages started their voodoo drums not long after we found the field, and we decided to leave. Two men haven't a chance when attacked by hordes of wild negroes.

Gardener. No, of course not. Still, it seems too bad to leave a fabulously rich diamond field to be wasted.

Vedder. The few stones that we did take sold for high prices. I didn't keep any of my share, but Jacob had a ring made with one of his finest stones. He afterward gave it to me for saving his life that evil day. (*Shows a ring to Gardener.*) If it hadn't been for that, I guess I never would have made this trip.

Gardener. Why, Vedder?

Vedder. Never mind. I can't tell you any more now. I think I'll be getting to bed now; I'm very tired.

Gardener. Well, I'll help you unroll the packs. (*Moves to help Vedder, who walks over to untie the bedrolls.*)

Vedder. Never mind, Gardener. I can do it in just a few minutes. You've had a hard day.

Gardener. All right, if you're sure you'd rather do it yourself. (*Wanders over toward the fire and stands there awkwardly. After a*

moment, in which Santiago makes no move to open a conversation, Gardener speaks.) Vedder has been telling me some of his adventures, Santiago. What do you think of them?

Santiago. (*After silently staring at Gardener for a moment.*) Very much like a mountain thunderstorm, sir. Great wind but little rain.

Gardener. Yes, I suppose you might feel that way about it. But tell me, haven't you ever had any remarkable experiences? I'm sure you must have had in all those years in guiding prospectors through this barren country.

Santiago. You are still young, sir, and care for those wild tales, which are like the lightning, a bright flash and then nothing. But I am old and more concerned with omens sent by my ancestors from the Great Spirit. Without heeding them we are eternally lost. (*He stops speaking and gazes into the fire, apparently lost in reverie.*)

Gardener. (*Rather uneasily.*) Do you mean, Santiago, that you have seen omens affecting us and this journey? Santiago, speak to me.

Santiago. Omens? Yes, many of them . . . many omens. (*Lapses again into his trance-like silence.*)

Gardener. Vedder mentioned a legend about these mountains. He said that it wasn't true, but I still want to know about it.

Santiago. A legend? Yes, sir, there is a legend, although few white men will believe it. Still, not many approach these mountains. (*Laughs silently to himself and then quickly recovers his usual gravity.*) Yes, it is a legend, but my forefathers knew it to be true.

Gardener. Please tell me, Santiago. I've heard many legends, but none that seemed so close to me. It seems that these mountains have eyes and the means to transmit and avenge the things we do among them.

Santiago. You are right, sir; they do have eyes, and, as you say, the power to avenge the wrongs done among them. (*Looks wildly about.*) Yes, the power to avenge, I say. He will find out. (*Rises.*)

Gardener. (*Somewhat frightened.*) Please, Santiago, you must be calm. Sit down and tell me the story.

Santiago. (*Assuming his usual collected manner.*) Yes, master, I must be calm. You want to hear about the mountains? (*Gardener nods.*) Although for years they were left in the quiet of the sun and the wind that they loved, a tribe of Indians finally struggled across the desert several centuries ago, and founded a great civilization fifty miles from the hills. Occupied with building their homes and irrigating the field, these people had little time to disturb the crags, but through the years the fateful cliffs were malignantly plotting their downfall.

Gardener. It sounds like feudal lords jealously watching their neighbors for a chance to pounce upon them.

Santiago. With the passing of the years the Indians grew prosperous, a tower was erected to guard the fields, and the people were happy and secure with summer crops stored for winter. Unfortunately there was not enough work to keep them occupied.

Gardener. What happened next, Santiago?

Santiago. Restless because of this unaccustomed leisure, some of the men began to explore the surrounding country, which they had not had time to do before.

Gardener. Restless men always seem to be a dangerous element in a country. And then, mountains seem to be irresistible to men's curiosities.

Santiago. Despite the warnings of the older men who begged them not to leave the village unprotected, the young braves mustered an expedition to explore the Superstition Mountains. Many were killed in the journey by poisoned water in the desert springs and the untold horrors of the plains. Many weary days passed, and when they finally reached the foothills only a few were not too ill to go on.

Gardener. I don't see how any of them survived even that long. Even with our equip-

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Words and Music

By CHARLES GEORGE

3 m., 9 girls and extras

Two easy int. Modern costumes

Full Evening

man and visualizes him as she writes. Jerry's preference is for a big, handsome "he-man" type. The only man around the place is the janitor, Jesse. Longing for adventure and thrills, Jerry appropriates the janitor's clothes and late at night steals out of the school in her male attire. In the second act, the morning after her flight, Jerry arrives at the "model farm" run by young William Smith. Tired and hungry from her wanderings, Jerry seeks shelter and food and is told she will have to work for them. The tasks that William and his housekeeper, Minnie Dildock, give the new "hired boy" to perform and Jerry's efforts to cope with them and not reveal her identity, create screamingly funny situations. But all this is merely a trifle to the "hot water" Jerry gets into when the letter she had written in the first act arrives at the farmhouse, for she had chosen the name of William Smith as her imaginary "romance." An attempted kidnapping; the arrival of Miss Prim and Jerry's mother; a reconciliation between Minnie Dildock and Jesse, the janitor, who is Minnie's estranged husband; these and many other thrilling and humorous incidents form the plot of this charming musical comedy. Of course, Jerry decides to become Mrs. Bill Smith. Youth, romance, comedy, drama, beauty and melody; all are combined to make *My Tomboy Girl* the musical comedy perfect.

MISS BLUE EYES

Words and Music

By CHARLES GEORGE

6 m., 7 girls and extras

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all the performances that week, Reynolds had noticed this lovely girl and nicknamed her "Miss Blue Eyes," for he thought her eyes the loveliest he had ever seen. When the play begins, we find the Farnsworth family in their summer home at a large seaside resort. Fay has steadfastly refused to marry a young man, Donald Deming, whom her father desires as a son-in-law. Fay cannot get Reynolds out of her mind. She sings his songs, she reads every word that is printed about him and her room is filled with his photographs. Reynolds is billed to appear "in person" at a local theatre. Unbeknownst to Fay, her father sends for Reynolds and offers him any amount of money if he can cure his daughter of this infatuation. Not knowing that this girl is the lovely "Miss Blue Eyes," Reynolds agrees to come to luncheon and in a charming song number, "The Love Cure," he tells Franklin that he will cure his daughter by pretending to be everything uncouth and disagreeable, thereby substituting disgust for admiration in Fay's heart. You can imagine his chagrin when he arrives for luncheon and discovers the girl to be his adored "Miss Blue Eyes" for, like Fay, he is smitten. It is seldom that a musical comedy possesses such a good, sound story. Each and every role is splendid, the comedy is clean, delicious and infectious and the music simply beautiful. An enormous success in Elgin, Illinois, where it played to almost eight thousand satisfied patrons.

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ment we have had difficulty. Santiago. But the more healthy men were determined to explore further, and swallowed up by the silence of the hills, they were never heard from again. After waiting hopelessly for several months, their comrades, watching the buzzards circling above, took their only chance for escape and left the mountains again in peace. Gardener. But, Santiago, after that long trip those Indians were in very poor condition. Under the circumstances it seems strange to me that they ever reached the foothills, and once lost in them those wretched men would have no chance of finding their way out. Santiago. Yes, sir, that's what the villagers said to the few stragglers who returned. Not long after that the town was attacked, and since the larger part of the garrison was either sick or lost, the invaders conquered. The years again rolled by, and the story of the journey was almost forgotten. Gardener. Please tell me the rest. Santiago. You must not be so impatient. A story too quickly told is a story lost. Gardener. I'm sorry if I've offended you, Santiago, but the legend is interesting, and I want to hear what happened next. Santiago. After nearly twenty years had passed some young Indians, hearing the strange tale from their grandparents, decided to make another journey to the hills. They were well supplied and, when last seen, in good health. But they never returned! Gardener. That is strange, Santiago. Santiago. Other parties set out, never to be heard from again. And always they are followed by buzzards. It has been said that as a punishment to anyone assaulting these cliffs they are transformed into buzzards and forced to feed on the bodies of their fellow men as they perish here. Gardener. I say, Santiago, that's rather unpleasant. Do you mean that no one has ever returned?

Santiago. No one but the poor Lost Dutchman, who died of a horrible disease soon after he escaped. Gardener. Then we... Santiago. Then we are doomed also. You see, the souls of the dead never find a peaceful resting place while their bones remain in these mountains. (An owl hoots nearby.) Gardener. (Jumping up.) What was that? Santiago. Your friend, Vedder, would call it an owl. We know better. Gardener. (Laughing nervously.) Really, Santiago, you have me in quite a nervous state. By the way, where is Vedder? (He turns to find Vedder working hard at a stubborn knot in one of the bedrolls. He has spread a bed for Gardener while Gardener was talking to Santiago. Vedder is rather irritated because of the knot.) Santiago has explained the mountain legend to me, Vedder, but I can't quite believe it. What do you think? Vedder. (Turning angrily.) What difference does it make to you what I think? You sit there idly listening to a lot of absurd nonsense while I have to do all the unpacking. Gardener. But, Vedder, I offered... Vedder. I know, but you made no real effort to help. You'd rather listen to Santiago's myths. Gardener. I'm sorry if you feel that way about it. Please let me finish while you rest. Vedder. No, go back to your stories. (Gardener hesitates.) Go back, I say! (Vedder turns as if to strike Gardener and in doing so steps back too far and upsets a water container. As the water spills on the ground and is soaked up by the soil, Santiago rushes forward, aghast at the sight. The three men stand helplessly around.) Santiago. The last of the water! Vedder. (Running forward and seizing him roughly.) The last of the water! What can you mean? How about these other containers? Santiago. The horses kicked them over when I was unloading them.

Vedder. How careless of you! Don't you realize that without water we can never hope to escape from this place? We're helpless now, and you alone are responsible! (Santiago, enraged by the insults, rushes towards Vedder and is topped by Gardener's intervention.) Gardener. Fighting won't help us, Santiago. Remember that without water... (Stops speaking and covers his face with his hands.) Vedder. Come, Gardener, we still have some resources. Don't let this upset you so. Gardener. (Pulling himself together with great effort.) You're right, Vedder. Santiago, don't you know where we can find some water? Santiago. I'm not sure, but I have heard of a spring somewhere near here that I might be able to find. Vedder. (Excited again.) Why can't you be more definite? How can we get out of here? It's a regular tomb. Just look at those solid walls rising on each side! (Pauses.) Why doesn't someone say something? Don't look at me that way. (Santiago mutters something to himself.) What did you say? I won't have you whispering behind my back! Do you hear? (Rushing toward him.) Get out of my sight! Get out! (Santiago sullenly walks towards the right. Vedder sobs hysterically.) Gardener. (Accosting Santiago.) You had best go down and attend to the horses, Santiago. Vedder will be all right in a few minutes. (Looking up at the mountains.) But what he says is true; this is like a tomb... an extremely dry one, though. Go now, Santiago, please. (Exit Santiago, at right. Gardener returns to the fire, leaving Vedder to recover himself. Vedder gradually becomes calmer.) Vedder. I'm sorry, my boy. I don't usually collapse like this when trouble comes my way, but this place somehow gets my nerves. I can't understand it. Of course, there isn't anything to that Indian legend.

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Gardener. But there is something to it, Vedder. This place is queer.

Vedder. (Again excited.) No, don't say that. We can't believe in such things or we'll all go mad!

Gardener. But, Vedder, how can you explain. . .

Vedder. Stop talking about it, will you. I can't stand it much longer. This trip has changed me; I can't seem to think straight any more.

Gardener. Vedder, this whole expedition is a complete mystery to me. I know it was my part of the bargain not to ask questions, but now that all this has happened, I think I'm entitled to know what it's all about. We're in it together now, and I want to know just what we are in.

Vedder. Well, I suppose that's fair enough, Gardener. If I had foreseen what was going to happen, I never would have brought you along. . . or come myself either.

Gardener. That's right. Together we might get out of here. . . alone we will perish. If we preserve the horses' strength, we ought to do it in a few days, since Santiago knows where we can find water. But we must have the horses!

Vedder. Nothing will happen to them. But about the story of this trip. . . do you remember how I had Jacob Walz's life in Africa?

Gardener. Yes.

Vedder. He never forgot it. Soon after that adventure we parted, Jacob to prospecting in the United States, and I for a treasure hunt in the Pacific. We corresponded frequently at first, but gradually we lost interest and stopped altogether.

Gardener. It's funny how you can lose touch with people. Sometimes it's just as if you had never known them.

Vedder. Yes, it is odd. Years later, when I had almost forgotten him, I returned to my headquarters to find a letter from him dated only a few days before. He said that he was very ill and if I came to him immediately, he had a secret that would prove profitable to me. Having nothing else to do, and feeling a little sorry for him, I left for the West that same night.

Gardener. Weren't you even curious to hear what he had to tell you?

Vedder. I suppose so, but I didn't even guess what it was. He was worse than I knew from the letter. The minute I saw him, I knew he didn't have much longer to live. Such a sadly changed man I have never seen before. His eyes were like burning coals sunk deep in the ashen gray of his forehead, and his hands were so emaciated that they looked like buzzards' claws.

Gardener. Buzzards?

Vedder. Yes, what difference does it make?

Gardener. Nothing, only there have been so many of them following us for the past two days.

Vedder. That doesn't mean anything, Gardener. The Indians make a lot of it, but don't let it worry you.

Gardener. But Vedder, Santiago said. . .

Vedder. Never mind what that Indian said.

Gardener. All right, Vedder, please go on.

Vedder. Well, I never would have known him, there was so much change. Even his character seemed different, although after talking to him for a few minutes I knew him to be my old friend.

Gardener. It must have been a great shock to find him so altered.

Vedder. It was, Gardener. As it happened, he knew that he was dying, poor chap, and could hardly wait to tell me his secret.

Gardener. What was it?

Vedder. He had lost all his possessions in a fruitless vein, and finding a wealthy man willing to grubstake him, Jake had taken his advice to explore the Superstitions. There he found an unbelievably rich mine from which the ore was ninety per cent pure gold. He showed me some of it that he kept under his pillow, and told me that a share was mine for once saving his life.

Gardener. At least he was grateful for what you had done. Many men would have never rewarded you, but would have taken the whole treasure for themselves.

Vedder. But you forget, Gardener, that the man was dying. He knew he could never again go into those mountains himself, and on his deathbed thought it best to atone for past sins by rewarding those persons who had most helped him during his life.

Gardener. Persons? I thought there was only one, yourself.

Vedder. No, there were two. The other is Santiago.

Gardener. Santiago! . . . But why?

Vedder. Santiago, as you know, is a guide. He had faithfully directed Jacob through many devious trails during his earlier and less prosperous years, and had refused to go into the Superstitions only because of the legends of his ancestors.

Gardener. Then Santiago has part of the secret?

Vedder. Yes, the most important part, that leading to the mine itself, while my half tells how to get to this pass. My only hope is to stake my claim before he has a chance.

Gardener. In other words, Santiago is to be the goat?

Vedder. Now don't get sentimental about that Indian again, Gardener. After what's happened tonight, I know I shouldn't be able to stand it.

Gardener. But, Vedder, why do you treat him so badly? He has just as much right to the mine as you have.

Vedder. Bah! Such childishness! You'll find out that Indians are no better than beasts when you've had as much experience with them as I have.

Gardener. Nothing could make me treat Santiago like a beast, no matter what happened.

Vedder. Why, you impertinent. . . Be quiet; here comes Santiago now. Look; he's running. What can be the matter? (Santiago runs onstage at right.)

Santiago. The horses are gone! They were startled by a noise. I couldn't stop them.

Gardener. (Running to the right and straining his eyes through the darkness.) The horses. . . the horses seem to be gone! (Laughs wildly as the other two men approach him.)

Vedder. It's that Indian. Santiago, what did you do to those horses. (Santiago says nothing, but glares at Vedder in smoldering hate.) What did you do? Why, you crimson devil, answer me! (Santiago still says nothing.) So you did do something, eh?

Santiago. I did nothing. I told you that the mountains would take their toll. . .

Vedder. How dare you mention that? You, only you, have been responsible for everything on this trip. Blaming it on the legend will do you no good. (Vedder leans down and picks up a whip used on the horses.) I'll teach you to cross me. (Flourishes whip.) (Santiago, unable to control himself, pulls out a knife and rushes at Vedder. Vedder immediately draws his gun and shoots the Indian. Santiago falls slowly to the ground, moaning. Gardener, who has been standing spellbound, runs to his aid.)

Gardener. (Wildly.) Santiago, Santiago, where is the water? Tell me how to get to the water! (Santiago groans and falls limply in Gardener's arms.) It's too late, Vedder, he's gone. I tell you, Vedder, we don't know where the water is! He couldn't tell me!

Vedder. (Who has been standing gazing dumbly at first at the smoking gun in his hand and then at the dying Santiago.) Didn't he tell you? We don't know where to find the water?

Gardener. (Looks up at the sky and whispers hoarsely.) Vedder, what is that that flew past my head? Look, it's circling there in the sky!

Vedder. (Hoarsely.) He was right, Gardener; it is a buzzard.

(The stage slowly grows dark and the fire gradually dims, leaving the two men standing silently as the curtain falls.)

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Open to any high school in good standing. Entries accepted until March 1.

For further information write: Prof. Beryl M. Simpson, State Teachers' College, Tempe, Arizona.

Illinois High School Speech League

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Date and Place: District Contests and Festivals April 9-10, State Contests and Festivals, April 23-24, at Urbana-Champaign, Ill.

Open to any high school registered with Illinois High School Speech League.

For further information write: A. D. Huston, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.

Illinois Wesleyan University Annual Prize Contest

Sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan University.

Date and Place: Usually held the last Saturday in April, at Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Ill.

Open to any high school student not over 22 years of age. Entries accepted until three days before contest.

For further information write: Miss Martha Ware, Assistant Registrar, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Ill.

The Iowa Play Production Festival

Sponsored by Extension Division of the State University of Iowa.

Date and Place: (High School Division) April 1, 2, 3, at State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Open to all Iowa schools. Entries accepted until February 1.

For further information write: Harry G. Barnes, Sec'y, Room 13, Schaeffer Hall, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Annual High School Dramatic Tournament

Sponsored by Eastern Kentucky State Teachers' College.

Date and Place: April 29-30, at Eastern Kentucky State Teachers' College, Richmond, Ky.

Open to any high school in Kentucky. Entries accepted until April 1.

For further information write: Miss Pearl Buchanan, 318 South 2nd St., Richmond, Ky.

Maine State One-Act Play Competition for Secondary Schools

Sponsored by Association of Secondary School Principals of the State of Maine.

Date and Place: March 20 or May 8, at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine.

Open to all schools winning first place in the nine district contests held on or before March 6. Entries accepted until February 15.

For further information write: Prin. P. E. Johnson, High School, East Millinocket, Maine.

Midwestern Folk Drama Festival

Sponsored by State Teachers' College, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Date and Place: April 16-17, at Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Open to any college group or other theatrical group that will present plays submitted in this year's playwriting contests of the Midwestern Folk Drama Tournament. Entries accepted until April 10.

For further information write: Prof. Lealon N. Jones, State Teachers' College, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

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Open to any first-class public or private high school. Entries (limited to twenty) accepted until April 24.

For further information write: Prof. Herbert V. Hake, 216 Jesse Hall, Columbia, Mo.

Inter-State M. I. N. K. Contest

Sponsored by Peru State Teachers' College, Peru, Nebr.

Time and Place: March 19 and 20, at Peru State Teachers' College.

Open to any high school located in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas.

For further information write: Miss Ruth Howe, Contest Manager, Peru (Nebr.) State Teachers' College.

New Hampshire Drama Day

Sponsored by The Maskers, Central High School, Manchester, N. H.

Date and Place: Late in March, at Manchester, N. H.

Open to any high school in the State. Entries accepted until February 10.

For further information write: Marian Sawyer, Manchester High School Central, Manchester, N. H.

Little Theatre Tournament of Ithaca College

Sponsored by Department of English and Drama, Ithaca College.

Date and Place: May 5, 6, 7 and 8, at Little Theatre, Ithaca College, Ithaca, N. Y.

Open to high schools of the States of New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Entries accepted until April 25.

For further information write: Department of English and Drama, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York.

Fourteenth Annual Festival and State Tournament of the Carolina Dramatic Association

Sponsored by The Carolina Dramatic Association.

Date and Place: March 25, 26, 27, at The Playmakers Theatre, Chapel Hill, N. C.

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For further information write: John W. Parker, Sec'y, Carolina Dramatic Association, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Junior Playmaker Festival

Sponsored by North Dakota State University through The Dakota Playmakers.

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Sponsored by The National Thespian Society.
 Date and Place: Friday and Saturday, April 16, 17, at Denison University, Denison, Ohio.

Open to any high school or academy in central Ohio. Entries accepted until April 1.

For further information write: The National Thespian Society, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Second Annual One-Act Play Contest for the
 High Schools of Northeastern Ohio**

Sponsored by The National Thespian Society.
 Date and Place: Friday and Saturday, April 9 and 10, at Kent (Ohio) State University.

Open to any high school or academy in northeastern Ohio. Entries accepted until April 1.

For further information write: The National Thespian Society, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**First Annual One-Act Play Contest for the
 High Schools of Southeastern Ohio**

Sponsored by The National Thespian Society.
 Date and Place: Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20, at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.

Open to any high school or academy in southeastern Ohio. Entries accepted until March 10.

For further information write: The National Thespian Society, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

State High School One-Act Play Contest

Sponsored by Oklahoma High School Public Speaking League.

Date and Place: April 28-May 1, at University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.

Open to any high school in the State, upon payment of League fee. Entries accepted until February 1.

For further information write: Oklahoma High School Public Speaking League, 500 Union Tower, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.

Massachusetts Drama Day

Sponsored by a Committee of Drama Directors.
 Date and Place: Saturday, April 10, at Y. W. C. A. Hall, Emerson College, Boston, Mass.

Open to any public high school in State. Entries accepted until February 15. (Preliminary to New England Drama Days at Pawtucket, R. I.).

For further information write: Miss Barbara Wellington, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.

**One-Act Play Contest for West Virginia
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Sponsored by The National Thespian Society.
 Date and Place: Friday and Saturday, April 23, 24, at Fairmont (W. Va.) State Teachers' College.

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For further information write: The National Thespian Society, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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- Kay, Queen of the Underworld—Humorous.
- Ladies First—Humorous.
- A School for Scandal—Humorous.
- Hollywood Headache—Humorous.
- The Violin Maker—Dramatic.
- Jean-Marie—Dramatic.
- The Man Who Sat—Dramatic.
- Gallipeau—Dramatic.
- Riders to the Sea—Dramatic.
- Faith—Dramatic.

- A Way of Life—Oratorical.
- The Big Parade—Oratorical.
- Treason of Benedict Arnold—Oratorical.
- Youth Speaks—Oratorical.
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What's New Among Books and Plays

EDITED BY H. T. LEEPER

Reviews appearing under this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. In most instances, these reviews are prepared with the hope that they prove of practical value to our readers.

Night of January 16th, a comedy-drama in three acts by Ayn Rand. Longmans, Green and Co. 11 m., 10 w. Royalty quoted upon application.

You may recall that this play was a sensational hit on Broadway during the 1935-36 season, and that the newspapers made much of the fact that members of the audience were selected for the role of jurors.

Night of January 16th, is in many ways a successor to that other hit of a few seasons ago entitled *The Trial of Mary Dugan*. The entire action takes place in the Superior Court of New York City. The people of the State of New York versus Karen Andre, who is being accused of the murder of Bjorn Faulkner. As the witnesses for the State testify, we begin to believe Karen Andre is really guilty. However, when the defense presents its case, the guilty party seems to be either Faulkner's father-in-law or Larry Regan, a gangster, or an unknown third party. Each of the witnesses seems to add to the mystery of the case, and as the end of the exciting trial approaches, we find it a difficult matter to say whether Karen Andre is guilty or not guilty. The author has provided a satisfactory closing for either verdict the jury may render.

The ease with which this play can be staged, as well as the fact that it requires a large cast, makes it an excellent choice for the director who wants to stage a play that makes use of many characters. The play is for advanced dramatic groups only, especially colleges and universities, many of which have already placed it on their production schedule for this year.

The Cuckoo's Nest. By H. Stuart Cottman and Vergne Shaw. Row, Peterson and Co. 6 m., 5 w. Royalty quoted on application.

The Cragwells from Nashville—Phyllis, her brother, Barry, and her Aunt Fanny—find themselves stranded in New York City. A lodging house where they take refuge from an irate taxi driver turns out to be vacant, furnished, and for rent. Desperation leads them to decide to stay there until they can make some money, the realty company to be paid later. When Douglas Breen, a handsome young man, appears and asks to rent a room an idea is born and they proceed to open a boarding-house, with Faith McLeister, their old Scotch servant, in charge of the finances. Soon the house is filled with odd and interesting persons brought to them by the taxi man who has joined in their plan. Isadore Klottzwich, representative of the realty company, arrives to complicate matters, but Douglas Breen turns out to be the owner of the house, and his proposal to Phyllis solves the problems at hand.

This is an excellent comedy for high schools. Every part is well adapted for good character work. The story will hold the attention of any audience, and students will like to work with it. One set.

An Old Fashioned Girl, a play in three acts by John Ravold. Samuel French. 4 m., 9 w. Royalty \$10.00.

A dramatization of Louisa M. Alcott's old favorite about Polly and her girl friends who live with her at Miss Mills' boarding house. How Polly helps the girls thru their troubles, the Shaws when they lose their fortune in "The Crash" of 1875, and how she wins her hero, Tom, in spite of the designs of Trix, the fashion butterfly, make up the old story which is too well known to need re-telling here.

The play retains the flavor of the book, altho it perhaps becomes a bit static in spots due to its attempt to follow the original as nearly as possible. Audiences will doubtless find many an amusing parallel between the depression of the Seventies and the one we have been going thru. Costumes and the one setting used are of this post-Civil War period. The predominance of girls in the cast will be an advantage if the costuming is to be done by the producing group, as well as an advantage if there is a limited number of boys available.

The Valiant One, a comedy drama in three acts by Rachel Crothers. The Northwestern Press. 3 m., 5 w. Royalty \$25.00.

This is an absorbing play on the theme of parents' attempts to dominate the lives of their children. Wealthy Judge Nolan has given his only daughter, Phyllis, every educational advantage. He has always entirely dominated his wife, and now his daughter returns home from her education in Europe to find that he has completely planned her future for her. Phyllis' education has given her ideals and her absence from home has given her a sense of freedom and a desire to live her own life. Her father expects her to marry Berry Wyman, a rich and influential business man who can help get him elected governor. Wyman is brought to trial for irregularities in his business methods, but Nolan's defense manages to win an acquittal. The inevitable clash comes when Phyllis learns the true state of affairs. She renounces her father's home and money to marry a local boy who is poor, but with whom she can have happiness and her ideals.

A play of absorbing interest and well worth doing. One set is required, that of a luxuriously furnished living room of wealthy people. The furniture is rearranged and new pictures hung for the second act.

Noah, a fantasy in three acts by Andre Obey. Samuel French. 5 m., 4 w., and 8 extras who portray the animals. Royalty on application.

Reminding one somewhat of *The Green Pastures*, this quaintly charming retelling of the Bible legend is at once amusing, childishly absurd, and tenderly devout. Noah's famous voyage begins well enough, but soon doubts and dissensions arise in the family. Ham particularly is the trouble maker. At the end, after the ark has landed on Ararat, Noah's children rudely desert him and his friends the animals turn hostile. Even his wife failed to sympathize, and Noah, a tired old man, turns again to his faith for support.

Splendid material for stylized production by colleges and other advanced groups.

Angel Unawares, *The Instincts of a Lady*, *Bread Upon the Waters*. Ivan Bloom Hardin Co., Des Moines, Iowa.

Angel Unawares, a new light mystery comedy in three acts by Felicia Metcalfe, author of the Broadway success, *Come Easy*. The cast consists of five men, five women, and the scene one interior. When the Dawsons arrive at their summer cottage for peace and quiet, they walk right into everything else. The situations are hilariously funny, and it is the family type of comedy which every audience enjoys. Price 50 cents. Royalty, \$10.00.

The Instincts of a Lady, by Kerry Fairfax. A comedy for five women, and extras. The scene is a living room, part of the Model Home in a department store. Mrs. Todd, prepared to dislike her prospective daughter-in-law, comes to meet Marjory, and mistakes slangy Ditty,

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for her son's fiancée. Ditty manages to complicate things generally but finally Mrs. Todd meets, and approves of Marjory. Price 50 cents.

Bread Upon the Waters, a drama by George Callahan. The scene is one interior, and the characters include three men, one woman, and a boy. For those who wish a good contest play, here is a gripping story, a tense situation, and a smashing climax. The Chinese houseman, and the Mexican outlaw are splendid characters. Price 50 cents. Royalty, \$10.00.

Revenge, Confidence Man, The Round-Up of Minnie, Rooting For Ruth. Eldridge Entertainment House, Franklin, Ohio.

Revenge, is a drama in one act by Margaret P. Brown. One man, three women. Sybil, after ten years, is still bitter against Carol for "stealing" Richard, the man she loved. Driven into a lonely old house by a storm, she finds Carol living there. Richard is supposed to be dead, but Sybil finds him alive but a mental wreck, hidden there by Carol because he had forged a note. Sybil's long wished-for chance for revenge is at hand, but she does not take it. Good drama. Royalty \$5.00. Price 35 cents.

Confidence Man, a comedy in one act by James Walter Blakeley. Four men, three women. A clever little farm comedy in which Jimmy Doyle, intelligent young farm-hand, uses a new way to foil the hard-hearted neighbor's attempt to foreclose the mortgage. No cash is available, but each of several people owes or wants to buy something from another. Jimmy arranges it so that the debts cancel and each gets what he wants. Price 30 cents.

The Round-Up of Minnie, a comedy in one act by Freda Graham Bundy. There are five men and two women in the cast. Spike Rogers wants to buy a horse named Minnie from Bill Jones, but lands by mistake at the house of Sam Jones who has a daughter, Minnie. Spike talks about the horse, Sam about his daughter, and the resulting conversation is extremely amusing. Short, but quite clever. The men wear cow-boy costumes. Price 30 cents.

Rooting for Ruth, a comedy in one act by Eugene G. Hafer, for four men and four women. Ruth's cranky father is taking steps to break up the match between Ruth and the neighbor's boy, Frank, in favor of the wealthy Harry Rogers. Frank gets Oscar, whose clothing is a riot of ill-chosen colors, to pose as Rogers and overthrows father's plans. The old story of mistaken identity, but it is still funny. Price 35 cents.

Readings for High School Declamatory Contests. Ivan Bloom Hardin Co., Des Moines, Iowa.

The Man Who Sat, by W. D. Steele. A man who has lost his legs in an explosion is urged to take a new lease on life by a woman who does not know of his injury. An appealing human interest story.

The Violin Maker, by F. Coppee. Ferrari decides to give his daughter in marriage to the one who wins the prize for fashioning the sweetest violin. Filippo, a hunchback, is apparently the winner, but Sandro is the girl's lover. Filippo realizes that he cannot marry the girl and steps aside in favor of Sandro.

All in the Handling, by M. Draheim. Junior gives his mother a thrill when he, in order to secure a pass for the circus, becomes a temporary assistant to the snake-man. Very good.

Kay, Queen of the Underworld, by E. Griffiths. Malcolm steals Rosa May's dog and leaves it with Kay. He then rescues the dog to win Rosa May's favor. An excellent children story.

Youth Speaks, by W. B. McPherson. A strong oration showing what would happen if youth refused to go to war. Excellent for contests. A timely appeal.

Strength, Sorrow Born, by K. Andrews. A forceful oration describing the reward which comes to those who must struggle for what they have. Effective for high schools.

Marrying Martin, a comedy in three acts by Olive White Garvey. Frederick B. Ingram Publications. 3 m., 7 w. No royalty for first performance provided ten books are purchased. Additional performances \$2.50 each.

Can one's relatives or friends choose one's wife more scientifically than one's heart can? At any rate, the idea is tried on young Martin Clayton. Martin's sister and sister-in-law bring in the candidates they have chosen and so does Dr. Wilbur, the psychologist Martin's sister has had instructing him. Aunt Sarah is right—at least in this case—for Martin falls in love with Phyllis, the pretty maid. A grand mix-up occurs when each of the three candidates proposes to Martin, who is too busy thinking of Phyllis to realize what they are talking about and accepts them all. However, Phyllis, who turns out to be a noted psychologist's daughter, extricates Martin from the predicament and all ends well. Martin gets Phyllis and Aunt Sarah gets Dr. Wilbur.

To the group that must put on a play with a limited number of men this light comedy will be welcome. The three male roles are Martin, a young man of twenty-three; Dr. Wilbur, middle aged and scholarly looking, and "Uncle" Abe, a dilapidated looking mountaineer of uncertain age. The women's roles are varied. One easy set and modern costumes are used.

The Third Yearbook of Short Plays. Edited by Lee Owen Snook. Row, Peterson & Co., Evanston, Ill. 1936. \$4.00.

As is true with the two preceding volumes of this series, *The Third Yearbook of Short Plays* offers the reader a delightful assortment of plays. Marked by a variety of themes representative of all parts of the country, freshness of subject matter, and a wise choice of plays well adapted for classroom study and production, this volume is a worthy addition to our growing collections of American plays.

Of the twenty-five plays included in this volume, twelve of which, according to the editor, are plays of youth, and the remaining, plays with "some smack of age," we mention the following ones which we like particularly well: *All the Rivers*, *Life Line*, *The Bride Wore Red Pyjamas*, *Words and Music* by Pierrot, *Civilized*, *Gratitude*, *Let's Honeymoon Again*, *Sunset Becomes Rhythm*, *The Joke-ative Man*, *The Wolfenstein*, and *Afraid of the Dark*. Popular playwrights represented include: Warren Beck, Edna Higgins Strachan, George Savage, Agnes E. Peterson, Belle M. Ritchey, and George E. Callahan.

Since there is no royalty charged for amateur stage production of any of the plays in this collection, *The Third Yearbook of Short Plays* is an indispensable volume for the teacher and director of dramatics. Most of the plays furnish excellent material for study and discussion. Several of them will undoubtedly find a place in our forthcoming spring contests and festivals.

Practice in Dramatics. By Edwin Lyle Harden. Walter H. Baker Co., Boston, Mass. 1936. \$1.60.

This book has been prepared to supply the need for specific material for practice and study in the fundamentals of dramatic production. Mr. Harden has made a happy choice of selections for practice which meet the high school student's ability and interest, and which afford ample opportunity for worth while study in the field of acting. Using as his basis for practice excerpts taken from a number of our best plays, the author presents units of study in characterization, tempo, stage balance, interpretation, reaction and response, transitions, atmosphere, climaxes, pantomime, pause, and emotional response. There is a much-felt need for a book of this type. Mr. Harden has approached his subject from the teaching point of view, and has produced a volume that every teacher and student of dramatics will want in his library.

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High School Operettas

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Music by JOHN LAURENCE SEYMOUR

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Music by GEOFFREY O'HARA

King Jonah of Amnesia plans to marry his daughter Princess Vera to Prince Florio the son of King Pomposo of Montebello. Each monarch believes the other to be rich. The Princess and Prince refuse to marry and both run away. The result is a mutual declaration of war. Meanwhile, the runaway Princess and Prince have met and fallen in love.

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Our Periodicals in Review

REVIEWED BY LOTTA JUNE MILLER

Articles reviewed in this department are selected for their practical value to drama teachers and students. These reviews will have achieved their purpose if they instill a desire among our readers to maintain an active acquaintance with the periodicals.

Katharine Cornell

By CLARA BERANGER
Woman's Home Companion for
December, 1936

The urge to become an actress was born early in the person of Katharine Cornell. Her father, whose collegiate education prepared him for a doctor, deserted his profession to become the owner and manager of "The Star Theater" in Buffalo, New York. This deep affection for the theater reached the roots of the Cornell family tree, as her grandfather, Douglas Cornell, even went so far as to build a stage on the top floor of his house and gave plays, using his friends as actors. With this background, it is no wonder that America's First Lady of the Theater persisted in spite of all opposition in seeking her goal.

Because of her lack of physical beauty, her family as well as friends and producers scoffed at her ambition. It was only after years of hard struggle that she succeeded in securing her first professional role, a four-word part in an Ed Goodman show. From this lowly beginning she progressed through a variety of roles until now she has reached the peak of dramatic success.

You will enjoy this friendly visit with Katharine Cornell, telling of her personal desires and yearnings from early childhood to the present time. The *Woman's Home Companion* continues the account in the January issue.

Two Hits

By RUTH WOODBURY SEDGWICK

The Stage for December, 1936

Little did our friend Shakespeare realize the importance of his genius when he penned the dialogue for the "Mad Dane." Little did he realize that this vehicle would remain the most coveted masculine role for three hundred years. But such is the case. Here we have John Gielgud and Leslie Howard, both English actors, vying with one another to produce the most outstanding *Hamlet* of their age.

Miss Sedgwick, therewith, has taken a Christmas and Thanksgiving mouthful, all at once, and has attempted to give a critical account of both performances. Most of the spices and sauces have found their place in the flavor of Mr. Gielgud.

Hamlet

By ROSAMOND GILDER

Theater Arts Monthly for December, 1936

"Hamlet" and more "Hamlet"! No longer should students feel that their English course of study is outdated and untimely. The startling part is that reluctant students will find themselves "back numbers" if they do not read with understanding this masterpiece of the ages.

In this article we find a resume of the great "Hamlets" from Burbage, who created the role on the Globe stage under the vigilant eye of the author, on down through Thomas Betterton, David Garrick, John Philip Kemble, Edmund Kean, Edwin Booth, Henry Irving, and finally our own John Barrymore.

It seems that *Hamlet* has always been the true test of an actor's ability.

Maxwell Anderson

By RUTH WOODBURY SEDGWICK
The Stage for October, 1936

Private lives have always held a fascination, whether of Helen of Troy or Shirley Temple. Let us shovel away the snows of curiosity and satisfy our longing for just a stereopticon view of America's classical bard, Maxwell Anderson. Tucked safely away in the heart of a woodland near New York City, we find the author of *Elizabeth*, the *Queen*, *Mary of Scotland* and *Winterset*, penning his lofty philosophy in neat blank books bound in red, books that closely resemble ledgers, and ones which bare no erasures. It is amazing to observe his simple surroundings in contrast to his elaborate images. His cabin consists of the bare essentials, even necessitating his wading through freshets to gain admittance. It is here he can be at peace with himself and create his literary effigies. He is indeed the modern Rembrandt of verbal portraits.

Few playwrights are as prolific. *The Wingless Victory*, the new vehicle for Katharine Cornell, was completed in six weeks, while *The Masque of the Kings* and *High Tor*, his other new contributions, consumed two months and one month, respectively. These, as his other subscriptions since 1930, are rendered in blank verse in compliance with Goethe and his conception that "Dramatic Poetry is man's greatest achievement on this earth so far." One has only to read aloud the euphonious passages of *Mary of Scotland* to be in complete accord with his judgment. What better way could Mary have set forth her philosophy of government to Bothwell than in the following passages:

"I have been queen of France—a child-queen and foolish—

But one thing I did learn, that to rule gently
Is to rule wisely. The knives you turn on your people

You must sometime take in your breast."

The Actor Attacks His Part

IV. Nazimova

By MORTON EUSTIS

Theater Arts Monthly for December, 1936

Arriving from Russia with an unknown troupe of actors, the great Nazimova, exponent of the Moscow Arts Theater, played her first engagement in her mother tongue before small audiences. Had not an astute Broadway producer realized her genius, she might have returned to Russia, robbing the American stage of not only one of its greatest actresses, but seriously delaying the great revolutionary influence of her principles of acting: namely, "realism and restraint, feeling and emotion expressed in psychological instead of physical terms."

Within six months' time she learned the English language and made her debut in *Hedda Gabler*. It is in the *Isben* plays that she has won the widest acclaim.

Due to her long and careful technical training as well as her innate intelligence and deep emotional power, she far surpasses most of her American contemporaries. She says, "The actor should not play a part. Like the Aeolian harp that were hung in the trees to be played only by the breeze, the actor should be an instrument played upon by the character he depicts."

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FRENCH'S PLAYS!

Setting the Pace in High Schools
From Coast to Coast

SPRING DANCE, Denton—MARY OF SCOTLAND, Los Angeles—GROWING PAINS, Herington—THE NUT FARM, Mendota—THE TAVERN, Jersey City—NOAH, Longmeadow—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, Plainfield—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Philadelphia—LADY OF LETTERS, Hartford—THE PATSY, Middletown—SMILIN THRU, Jefferson City—TREASURE ISLAND, Mineola—THE GHOST TRAIN, Barrington—TONS OF MONEY, Royal Oak—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Allentown—FLY AWAY HOME, Hutchison—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Highland Park—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Pocatello—SKIDDING, Odessa—LITTLE WOMEN, Ballston Spa—VALLEY FORGE, Iowa City—PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, Staunton—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, Ogden—GROWING PAINS, Fremont—FRESH FIELDS, Anderson—FLY AWAY HOME, Fort Collins—THE NUT FARM, Mt. Kisco—DOUBLE DOOR, Boulder—NOAH, Provo—THE TAVERN, Portales—THREE CORNERED MOON, Stockton—THE GHOST TRAIN, Kingman—TONS OF MONEY, Waverly—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Salina—THE GOOSE HANGS HIGH, Pompton Lakes—MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH, Canton—THE BAD MAN, Cortland—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Midland—SKIDDING, Glendale—LITTLE WOMEN, Winters—A FULL HOUSE, Mt. Ranier—MARY OF SCOTLAND, Ann Arbor—SPRING DANCE, Ames—PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, Montevillo—FRESH FIELDS, Plainfield—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, Bellingham—GROWING PAINS, Manlius—FLY AWAY HOME, Lime—NOAH, Hays—DOUBLE DOOR, Ridgfield—THE TAVERN, San Francisco—THE NUT FARM, Weeping Water—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, Fort Collins—KEMPY, Bertha—ANOTHER LANGUAGE, Breezy Falls—MR. ANTONIO, Whittier—LADY OF LETTERS, Port Chester—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Limon—THREE CORNERED MOON, Mansfield—THE PATSY, Dryden—SMILIN THRU, Creston City—TREASURE ISLAND, Payson—TONS OF MONEY, Colorado Springs—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Kapowsin—FLY AWAY HOME, Fort Collins—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Gadsden—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Salt Lake City—LITTLE WOMEN, Blackstone—A FULL HOUSE, Greenacres—SKIDDING, Wauwatosa—SPRING DANCE, Duluth—PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, Williamsfield—GROWING PAINS, Rutland—MARY OF SCOTLAND, New Orleans—THE FOOL, Cleveland—CRIMINAL AT LARGE, Tucson—SPRINGTIME FOR HENRY, Columbus—LITTLE WOMEN, Edinburg—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Eastport—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Arlington—TONS OF MONEY, West Point—THE PATSY, Patterson—THREE CORNERED MOON, Sioux City—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Woodland—LADY OF LETTERS, St. Cloud—SPRING DANCE, Yonkers—PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, Columbus—MARY OF SCOTLAND, Cleveland—FRESH FIELDS, East Orange—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, Grand Rapids—GROWING PAINS, Mt. Morris—FLY AWAY HOME, Hutchison—NOAH, Phoenix—DOUBLE DOOR, La Grange—THE TAVERN, Bakersfield—THE NUT FARM, Thief River Falls—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, West Palm Beach—MR. ANTONIO, Fargo—LADY OF LETTERS, Alpena—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Aledo—THREE CORNERED MOON, College—THE PATSY, San Francisco—SMILIN THRU, West Seattle—TREASURE ISLAND, Lincoln—THE GHOST TRAIN, Amelia—TONS OF MONEY, Evanston—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Altadena—FLY AWAY HOME, Limon—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Candor—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Kansas City—A FULL HOUSE, Lakeview—LITTLE WOMEN, Washington—SKIDDING, Issaquah—SPRING DANCE, Buffalo—FRESH FIELDS, Cincinnati—THE LATE CHRIS-

TOPHER BEAN, Reedley—GROWING PAINS, Carey—NOAH, Palo Alto—DOUBLE DOOR, Claremont—THE TAVERN, Atlantic City—THE NUT FARM, San Bernardino—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, Montgomery—MR. ANTONIO, Jacksonville—LADY OF LETTERS, Martha's Vineyard—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Tucson—THREE CORNERED MOON, Patterson—THE PATSY, Fresno—SMILIN THRU, Carson City—TREASURE ISLAND, Philadelphia—THE GHOST TRAIN, New London—TONS OF MONEY, Ridley Park—A FULL HOUSE, Oklahoma City—LITTLE WOMEN, Robinson—SKIDDING, Cedarsburg—FRESH FIELDS, Youngstown—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, La Crosse—GROWING PAINS, Zeeland—NOAH, Westminster—DOUBLE DOOR, Altus—THE TAVERN, Santa Monica—THE NUT FARM, Ossining—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, St. Joseph—MR. ANTONIO, Fremont—LADY OF LETTERS, Cleveland Heights—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Tuba City—THREE CORNERED MOON, Sheldon—THE PATSY, Nogales—SMILIN THRU, North Bergen—TREASURE ISLAND, Brooklyn—THE GHOST TRAIN, Essex Falls—TONS OF MONEY, Lamar—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Tonkawa—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Eastport—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Logan—A FULL HOUSE, New Orleans—LITTLE WOMEN, Saginaw—SKIDDING, La Verne—ADAM AND EVA, Glen Cove—BAB, New York City—FRESH FIELDS, Grand Rapids—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, Ashland—GROWING PAINS, Bryan—NOAH, Berkeley—DOUBLE DOOR, North Adams—THE TAVERN, Baltimore—THE NUT FARM, Kennett Square—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, Waltham—MR. ANTONIO, Sandusky—LADY OF LETTERS, Loveland—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Lubbock—THREE CORNERED MOON, Asbury Park—THE PATSY, Paducah—SMILIN THRU, Rockville Center—THE GHOST TRAIN, Ft. Warren—TONS OF MONEY, Minneapolis—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, San Bernardino—IN THE NEXT ROOM, Erie—SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, Hartford—A FULL HOUSE, Knox—SKIDDING, San Francisco—MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM, Franklinville—TAKE MY ADVICE, Clinton Hollow—BIRD IN HAND, Kentfield—THE MAN FROM HOME, Culver—SO THIS IS LONDON, Rock Island—ARE YOU A MASON, Miller—ONLY 38, Kalamazoo—ADAM AND EVA, Big Moose—MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH, Farmersville—FRESH FIELDS, Philadelphia—THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN, Manchester—GROWING PAINS, Mt. Kisco—NOAH, Galesburg—DOUBLE DOOR, Davenport—THE TAVERN, College Park—THE NUT FARM, El Paso—THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES, Provo—MR. ANTONIO, Des Moines—LADY OF LETTERS, Peru—BIG HEARTED HERBERT, Nampa—THREE CORNERED MOON, Wayne—THE PATSY, Lake Placid—SMILIN THRU, Garden City—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Tonkawa—MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH, Union City—ADAM AND EVA, Salt Lake City—ONLY 38—Muncie—ARE YOU A MASON, Tacoma—SO THIS IS LONDON, Gorham—THE MAN FROM HOME, Providence—BIRD IN HAND, Winchester—TAKE MY ADVICE, Clinton—MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM, Menominee—SKIDDING, Chicago—LITTLE WOMEN, New York—A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED, Chicago—SMILIN THRU, Youngstown—THE PATSY, Goshen—MR. ANTONIO, Philadelphia—THREE CORNERED MOON, Coral Gables—DOUBLE DOOR, San Diego—NOAH, Denver—THE NUT FARM, New Orleans—MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM, Seattle—TAKE MY ADVICE, Salem—BIRD IN HAND, Peoria—SO THIS IS LONDON, Orland—MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH, Scotts Bluff.

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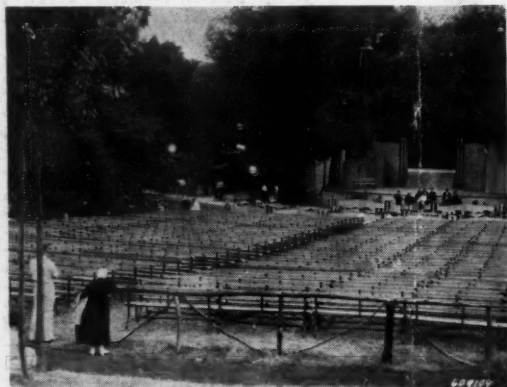
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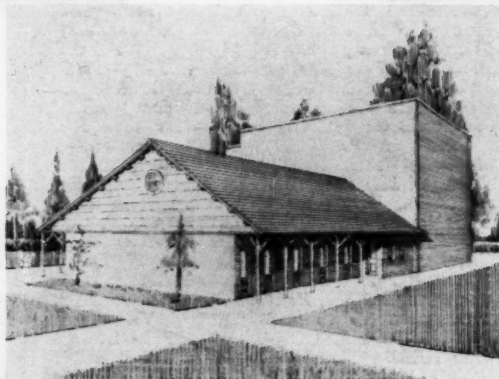
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